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The best letters of
Lady Mary Wortley
Montagu

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LAUREL-CROWNED
LETTERS
LADY MONTAGU

THE BEST LETTERS

OF

(Pierrepont)

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU

Edited

WITH A DEDICATORY LETTER TO LADY MONTAGU

BY OCTAVE THANET

CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG AND COMPANY
1890

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PREFACE.

THESE letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu are selected from the edition of W. Moy Thomas, which is based on Lord Wharncliffe's edition of 1837, printed mainly from the original letters. In selecting, the editor has had in view, first, the literary attractiveness of the letters; secondly, the light they throw on Lady Mary's personality; thirdly, their value as free-hand pictures of the time. Comments and notes of the previous editors, Mr. Thomas or Lord Wharncliffe, may be distinguished by their initials.

It is needless to say that no pretensions to scholarship are made by this little volume. I have sometimes found it necessary to omit portions of letters, but I have not presumed to chasten Lady Mary's style, any more than I have ventured to alter her eighteenth-century grammar.

O. T.

September, 1890.

DEDICATORY LETTER

TO

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

MADAM, — I am aware that I must employ an even more uncertain vehicle to reach you than the posts of which you so continually and vehemently complained. Nevertheless, nothing better offering, I venture this approach to your ladyship. I shall use a freedom allowable only to a shade, and quite indefensible to a lady of quality; but then you have been a shade so much longer than you were a lady of quality.

You died in 1762, full a hundred and twenty-eight years ago (excuse my vulgar agility in arithmetic), at the age of seventy-three. A wonderful seventy-three years they were, does one consider them. Whatever this world has to offer, Lady Mary, has been yours. You were a duke's daughter; your husband was an ambassador; you lived in palaces (though I protest the palaces of the eighteenth century to be vastly uncomfortable); you were beautiful and gifted and celebrated; Kneller painted you; Pope wrote verses on you; Congreve and Fielding and Addison and Steele admired you; you were the favorite equally

of princes and wits, — it is hard to imagine a more dazzling figure.

Yet I cannot believe you especially happy.

Does your ladyship remember the cynical speech of the Duchess of Orleans on her son? She said, "At my son's christening all the fairies gave gifts; but last of all came the churlish old fairy whom we had forgotten, and she added that he should not know how to use any of them."

Lady Mary, reading your letters, that ugly epigram is always at my elbow.

Look back at the story of your life, if you do not believe me. You were born in 1689. Your mother died early, and your father, Evelyn Pierrepont Lord Kingston, later Marquis of Dorchester, later Duke of Kingston, was (as your granddaughter Lady Louisa Stuart said) "far too fine a gentleman to be a tender or even considerate parent." You yourself compared him to the gay Sir Thomas Grandison, father of the immaculate Sir Charles.

Those were the days of the Kit-Kat Club; and every one knows how he paraded his wonderful little girl before the members, and won his wager that you were prettier and wittier than any lady on their list of toasts.

Your education was a good deal like Clarissa Harlowe's, with an ignorant, pious old governess, "the image of Mrs. Norton." But your father had a well-furnished library that helped you more than the governess. Somehow you learned Latin, and sent your translation of Epictetus to Bishop Burnet (who esteemed you a prodigy) with as priggish a

letter as ever schoolmaster received, — hardly more priggish, however, than those extraordinary essays on Friendship and Simplicity that you were sending to Mistress Anne Wortley. Did you suspect that Mistress Anne's brother wrote the replies, neatly docketing each rough draft "For my sister to Lady M. P." ?

Very soon Anne died, and you corresponded directly with Mr. Wortley. But I would not dismiss poor, pretty, docile Mistress Anne so cavalierly, as a mere domino for her brother's lovemaking. She was really an accomplished and charming woman, and Edward Wortley loved her tenderly.

There is a touch of pathos in Lady Bute's story how, when her father was best pleased with her, he would ask, "Don't you think she grows like my poor sister Anne?"

I have a regard for Mr. Wortley. He was a man of sense and honor; not a beau, as the word of the time was, but a cultivated gentleman, a critic of the fine arts, and the close friend of Addison and Steele. You yourself have praised his generosity. You quarrelled with your husband, no doubt; you deceived him, very possibly; but to the end of your life he remained the man whom you most esteemed. Even your father welcomed him as a suitor, until the question of settlements came up, and Mr. Wortley refused to entail his estate. The Marquis of Dorchester declared that *his* grandchildren should n't be beggars. Mr. Wortley was firm and the Marquis was firm, and the end was a complete rupture.

And then appears Mr. K——, with his Irish es-

tates and his ready settlements; and your tears are in vain, and my lord rashly buys the wedding finery (ah, that was a sore point afterwards! all those gorgeous gowns that he would not send after his rebellious child, all wasted; five hundred pounds flung away, a terrible sum in those days!), and at the last moment there is a hurried flight out of the house; the faithful gallant is in waiting; parson and license are ready, and away go the lovers in a coach and-six. Alas! not to be happy ever after; the evil fairy will see to that.

Speedily the letters grow querulous; then they grow cold. By the time Mr. Wortley is appointed ambassador to Turkey the couple are quite on the fashionable terms.

You accompanied your husband. The son who was to be your shame was a baby, and the daughter whose dutiful affection was to be your greatest comfort, and whose exaltation was to be your pride, was born to you in Constantinople. Your letters from Turkey, dear Madam, are very entertaining, very vivid. I am sure that you describe facts only; but your facts, in their expansive power, are like the mustard seed of the parable: "Which, indeed, is the smallest of seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

The Turkish journey had an important result: you (who certainly never ran after that virtuous place) became a Benefactor of your Kind. You observed the security against small-pox attained in Turkey by

inoculation, and introduced it to your countrymen. Your daughter's daughter, Lady Louisa, describes its reception. At once there was an outcry. "The clamors raised against the practice, and of course against her [Lady Mary], were beyond belief." The doctors were afraid of it; the clergy pounded their pulpits against the "impiety of thus seeking to take events out of the hands of Providence;" the very populace hooted at you in the streets for "an unnatural mother who had risked the lives of your own children." But the Princess of Wales was a stanch friend, the nobility and gentry rallied around you, and eventually you conquered.

You must have needed courage for such a fight. Courage, indeed, you never lacked; the misfortune was that like every other gift it turned against you; it was a mettled horse that kicked over the traces. You were too fearless to be cautious and not kind enough to be wise. High spirits and health and all that incense of admiration stifling the air for you intoxicated you; your wit ran a-muck through the follies of friend and foe. Slash! slash! slash! you were always at some poor creature. To save your life, you could n't help repeating a wicked joke or a pungent bit of scandal. You got the credit of every malicious ballad going. Denials were useless, because all the world knew that you had written ballads before, and one more or less could n't matter. You did n't write "Virtue in Danger," but you did write the "Epistle of Arthur Grey the Footman," which Mrs. Murray knew, and nothing would convince her that you had not written both; so there was an enemy for life.

And poor Lady Rich, very ridiculous no doubt in rose-colored ribbons, at her age affecting juvenile innocence, but a kind soul, who had always been civil to you; why must you jeer at her simperings? "Nay, but look you, my dear Madam, I grant it a very fine thing to continue always fifteen, — that every one must approve of, it is quite fair; but, indeed, indeed, one need not be *five* years old!" I dare say there was sly giggling over that slash; and I dare say, too, Lady Rich never again troubled herself to contradict the ugly tales about you that Mr. Pope was sliding into the gigglers' ears.

Pope is another instance.

You were a very great lady indeed at this period, — a reigning beauty. Your letters are full of routs and balls and commissions for your toilets. The toilets themselves (but I judge this was earlier) were commended by no less a personage than H. R. H. the Prince of Wales.

"Look how well Lady Mary is dressed!" says the Princess over the cards.

"Lady Mary always dresses well," answers the Prince.

As became a lady of fashion, you had a train of gallants; and Pope flattered with the rest. He wrote you a number of torrid letters. They would risk his bones written to a woman of position in our day; but yours was lenient. Here is an extract of the decenter sort: —

"I lie dreaming of you in moonshiny nights, exactly in the posture of Endymion gaping for Cynthia in a pic-

ture ; and with just such a surprise and rapture should I awake, if after your long revolutions were accomplished, you should at last come rolling back again, smiling with all that gentleness and serenity peculiar to the moon and you, and gilding the same mountains from which you first set out on your solemn melancholy journey. I am told that fortune (more just to us than your virtue) will restore the most precious thing it ever robbed us of. Some think it will be the only equivalent the world affords for Pitt's diamond, so lately sent out of our country ; which, after you was gone, was accounted the most valuable thing here. Adieu to that toy! let the costly bauble be hung about the neck of the baby king it belongs to, so England does but recover that jewel which was the wish of all her sensible hearts and the joy of all her discerning eyes. I can keep no measures in speaking of this subject. I see you already coming ; I feel you as you draw nearer ; my heart leaps at your arrival. Let us have you from the East, and the sun is at her service."

How was this adulation changed into gall? You said yourself that Pope made love to you, and you laughed in his face. There are half-a-dozen theories. Mr. Thomas, your learned editor, will have it that Pope took fire at your parody on his sentimental epitaph on the lovers killed by lightning. What does it matter? Somehow you wounded Pope's vanity to the quick. Did he intend "Sappho" for you? He denied the accusation. Did you help Lord —— write the "Verses to the Imitator of Horace"? You deny in turn. The allusions in them to his birth and his deformity were atrocious ; but so was his revenge, — he assassinated your reputation.

Trace nine out of ten of the brutal traditions about you to their source, and there stands "Horry Walpole," and behind smirks Mr. Alexander Pope.

I think that you always mentioned Walpole kindly. He is "Horry Walpole." You praise his "parts" and his "figure" with enthusiasm. But you were not so gentle to his mother, whom Horace loved. You were the partisan of Miss Skerritt, rival and successor of Lady Walpole. We all know the scandal about the second Lady Walpole. Poor thing, poor thing! let us be merciful. Lady Bute knew her in her youth, and never could speak of her unmoved, her sweet ways had so won the child's heart. But mercy was hardly to be expected from the neglected wife's son.

Besides Lady Walpole herself, do you imagine that Lord Orford was likely to forgive you if he ever heard of your making merry over *that* story?

One of Pope's and Walpole's accusations concerns this period. You plunged into a dismal quagmire by investing money (I take your own story) for one Rémond, a French wit and "servant" of yours. You put the money into South Sea Stock (you were always dabbling in lotteries and stocks and the like schemes that honest Mr. Wortley detested), and presently from nine hundred pounds it "was sunk to four hundred." Rémond had borne your disdain of his love with a beautiful patience, but it was a little too much to lose his money. He bemoaned to you, he raged at you, he vowed that he would send your letters to Mr. Wortley, he would expose your villanies to the whole world, — never was there such

a pinwheel of fury as he made of himself! Your panic was written out to Lady Mar; and certainly you were well scared. The affair comes to no conclusion. Somehow, you extricated yourself — or your husband extricated you; for in 1726 you are writing gayly to your sister that "the tumbling of stocks" does not affect you, and you "have no concern there or anywhere, but hearty prayers that everything may ever be exactly what it is now." "However," you add, "in this dear minute, in this golden now, I am tenderly touched at your misfortune, and can never call myself quite happy till you are so."

The "dear minute" will be brief. Early in the year your "sister Gower" will die, and not long after poor Lady Mar will go mad. Your son, "the dear little boy" to whom you are so devoted in the earlier letters, will begin that frantic career which shall make him an outcast. The quarrel with Pope will grow more virulent. You may sneer at the "wicked wasp of Twickenham," but his carrion wit will buzz over every dead folly or sin of yours, until, harassed and deafened and stung, you shall fly the field.

In 1739 you left England, not to return for twenty-three years. You never saw your husband again. Did Pope drive you away? Did you quarrel with Mr. Wortley? No answer was ever given by either of you. But however parted, this strange pair keep up a cheerful correspondence. The gentleman is rather chilly in his letters, but invariably polite. The lady writes with the best grace in the world; she is full of esteem and respect, and hardly stops short of affection.

has an abandon, a sportive gayety, as if it gambolled out of sheer lightness of heart.

I don't know that the effect is not helped rather than hindered by your freedom from the trammels of grammar. Verbs that are not tied to their subjects, but to tenses that agree or disagree in a sentence floating free as Heaven wills, and the artless pranks of your relative pronouns, would make any prose look unstudied, — not to say undressed. I think also, Madam, that we of the nineteenth century miss a good deal by our obsequiousness to the adverb. Why can't we let an adjective that can do his work quite as well, and often less clumsily, sometimes take his place? You did. You (and the others) said "extreme" and "mighty fine" and "monstrous stupid."

You were artificial, of course. The eighteenth century was always posing. Yet I find you more natural than your contemporaries. Letters, one always must bear in mind, were written for an audience when you wrote. To write a letter was an accomplishment. Letters were passed from hand to hand; they were frequently copied. An amusing letter-writer was as sure of applause as Garrick or the editors of the "Spectator" or "Tatler."

Lady Mary, I make no doubt that you had more ears in view than your correspondent's; but I doubt if you dreamed of the multitude who should find in your pages the pictures of your glittering but tawdry time, and your strange, vain, gifted, fascinating yet so seldom attractive self.

In order that the members of this multitude may

be increased, and in accordance with the taste of our times, which demands brevity as the first grace of the Muses, I have selected a few of your many admirable letters.

They are respectfully dedicated to you.

I remain, Madam,

Your ladyship's most humble,

Most obedient servant,

THE EDITOR.

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THE BEST LETTERS

OF

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

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LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

I.

TO MISS ANNE WORTLEY.[1]

July 21, 1709.

How often, my dear Mrs. Wortley, must I assure you that your letters are ever agreeable and beyond expression welcome to me? Depend upon it that I reckon the correspondence you favor me with too great a happiness to neglect it; there is no danger of your fault, I rather fear to grow troublesome by my acknowledgments. I will not believe you flatter me, I will look upon what you say as an obliging mark of your partiality. How happy must I think myself when I fancy your friendship to me even great enough to overpower your judgment! I am afraid this is one of the pleasures of the Imagination, and I cannot be so very successful in so earnest and important a wish. This letter is excessively dull. Do you know it is from my vast desire of pleasing you, as

[1] Miss Anne Wortley was the favorite sister of Mr. Edward Wortley Montagu. She died the last of this year.

there is nothing more frequent than for the voice to falter when people sing before judges, or as those arguments are always worst where the orator is in a passion. Believe me, I could scribble three sheets to —— (I must not name), but to twenty people that have not so great a share of my esteem and whose friendship is not so absolutely necessary for my happiness, but am quite at a loss to you. I will not commend your letters (let them deserve never so much), because I will show you 't is possible for me to forbear what I have mind to when I know 't is your desire I should do so. My dear, dear, adieu! I am entirely yours, and wish nothing more than that it may be some time or other in my power to convince you that there is nobody dearer than yourself to ——

I am horridly ashamed of this letter. Pray Heaven you may not think it too inconsiderable to be laughed at, — that may be.

II.

TO MISS ANNE WORTLEY.

Aug. 21, 1709.

I AM infinitely obliged to you, my dear Mrs. Wortley, for the wit, beauty, and other fine qualities you so generously bestow upon me. Next to receiving them from Heaven, you are the person from whom I would choose to receive gifts and graces. I am very well satisfied to owe them to your own delicacy of imagination, which represents to you the idea of a

fine lady, and you have good-nature enough to fancy I am she. All this is mighty well, but you do not stop there; imagination is boundless. After giving me imaginary wit and beauty, you give me imaginary passions, and you tell me I 'm in love. If I am, 't is a perfect sin of ignorance, for I don't so much as know the man's name; I have been studying these three hours, and cannot guess who you mean. I passed the days of Nottingham races [at] Thoresby, without seeing or even wishing to see one of the sex. Now, if I am in love, I have very hard fortune to conceal it so industriously from my own knowledge, and yet discover it so much to other people. 'T is against all form to have such a passion as that without giving one sigh for the matter. Pray tell me the name of him I love, that I may (according to the laudable custom of lovers) sigh to the woods and groves hereabouts, and teach it to the echo. You see, being I am in love, I am willing to be so in order and rule; I have been turning over God knows how many books to look for precedents. Recommend an example to me; and above all let me know whether 't is most proper to walk in the woods, increasing the winds with my sighs, or to sit by a purling stream, swelling the rivulet with my tears; maybe, both may do well in their turns. But to be a minute serious, what do you mean by this reproach of inconstancy? I confess you give me several good qualities I have not and I am ready to thank you for them, but then you must not take away those few I have; no, I will never exchange them. Take back the beauty and wit you bestow upon me, leave me my own medi-

ocrity of agreeableness and genius, but leave me also my sincerity, my constancy, and my plain dealing; 't is all I have to recommend me to the esteem either of others or myself. How should I despise myself if I could think I was capable of either inconstancy or deceit! I know not how I may appear to other people nor how much my face may belie my heart, but I know that I never was or can be guilty of dissimulation or inconstancy, — you will think this vain, but 't is all that I pique myself upon. Tell me you believe me and repent of your harsh censure. Tell it me in pity to my uneasiness, for you are one of those few people about whose good opinion I am in pain. I have always took so little care to please the generality of the world that I am never mortified or delighted by its reports, which is a piece of stoicism born with me; but I cannot be one minute easy while you think ill of

Your faithful ——

This letter is a good deal grave, and like other grave things dull; but I won't ask pardon for what I can't help.

III.

TO MISS ANNE WORTLEY.

Aug. 21, 1709.

When I said it cost nothing to write tenderly, I believe I spoke of another sex; I am sure not of myself. 'T is not in my power (I would to God it

was!) to hide a kindness where I have one, or dissemble it where I have none. I cannot help answering your letter this minute and telling you I infinitely love you, though, it may be, you 'll call the one impertinence and the other dissimulation; but you may think what you please of me, I must eternally think the same things of you.

I hope my dear Mrs. Wortley's showing my letters is in the same strain as her compliments, all meant for raillery, and I am not to take it as a thing really so; but I 'll give you as serious an answer as if 't was all true.

When Mr. Cowley and other people (for I know several have learned after the same manner) were in places where they had opportunity of being learned by word of mouth, I don't see any violent necessity of printed rules; but being where, from the top of the house to the bottom, not a creature in it understands so much as even good English without the help of a dictionary or inspiration, I know no way of attaining to any language. Despairing of the last, I am forced to make use of the other, though I do verily believe I shall return to London the same ignorant soul I went from it; but the study is at present amusement. I must own I have vanity enough to fancy if I had anybody with me, without much trouble perhaps I might read.

What do you mean by complaining I never write to you in the quiet situation of mind I do to other people? My dear, people never write calmly but when they write indifferently. That I should ever do so to you, I take to be entirely impossible; I must be

always very much pleased or in very great affliction, as you tell me of your friendship or unkindly doubt mine. I can never allow even prudence and sincerity to have anything to do with one another, — at least I have always found it so in myself, who being devoted to the one, had never the least tincture of the other. What I am now doing is a very good proof of what I say, — 't is a plain undesigning truth, — your friendship is the only happiness of my life ; and whenever I lose it, I have nothing to do but to take one of my garters and search for a convenient beam. You see how absolutely necessary it is for me to preserve it. Prudence is at the very time saying to me, Are you mad? you won't send this dull, tedious, insipid, long letter to Mrs. Wortley, will you? 'T is the direct way to tire out her patience ; if she serves you as you deserve, she will first laugh very heartily, then tear the letter, and never answer it, purely to avoid the plague of such another. Will her good-nature forever resist her judgment? I hearken to these counsels, I allow 'em to be good, and then — I act quite contrary. No consideration can hinder me from telling you, my dear, dear Mrs. Wortley, nobody ever was so entirely, so faithfully yours, as ——

I put in your lovers, for I don't allow it possible for a man to be sincere as I am ; if there was such a thing, though, you would find it ; I submit therefore to your judgment.

I had forgot to tell you that I writ a long letter directed to Peterborough, last post ; I hope you 'll have it. You see I forgot your judgment to depend upon your goodness.

IV.

TO MISS ANNE WORTLEY.

[THORESBY, postmark *Aug.* 27.]

I AM convinced, however dear you are to me, Mrs. Anne Wortley, I am no longer of any concern to you, therefore I shall only trouble you with an insignificant story when I tell you I have been very near leaving this changeable world; but now, by the doctor's assistance and Heaven's blessing, am in a condition of being as impertinently troublesome to you as formerly. A sore throat which plagued me for a long while brought me at last to such a weakness you had a fair chance of being released from me; but God has not yet decreed you so much happiness, though I must say this, — you have omitted nothing to make yourself so easy, having strove to kill me by neglect. But destiny triumphs over all your efforts; I am yet in the land of the living, and still yours.

V.

TO MISS ANNE WORTLEY.

Sept. 5, 1709.

MY dear Mrs. Wortley, as she has the entire power of raising, can also with a word calm my passions. The kindness of your last recompenses me for the injustice of your former letter, but you cannot sure be angry at my little resentment. You have read that a man who with patience hears himself called here-

tic can never be esteemed a good Christian. To be capable of preferring the despicable wretch you mention to Mr. Wortley is as ridiculous, if not as criminal, as forsaking the Deity to worship a calf. Don't tell me anybody ever had so mean an opinion of my inclinations; 't is among the number of those things I would forget. My tenderness is always built upon my esteem, and when the foundation perishes, it falls. I must own I think it is so with everybody — but enough of this; you tell me it was meant for raillery — was not the kindness meant so too? I fear I am too apt to think what is amusement designed in earnest, — no matter, 't is for my repose to be deceived, and I will believe whatever you tell me.

I should be very glad to be informed of a right method, or whether there is such a thing alone, but am afraid to ask the question. It may be reasonably called presumption in a girl to have her thoughts that way. You are the only creature that I have made my *confidante* in that case: I 'll assure you, I call it the greatest secret of my life. Adieu, my dear, the post stays, my next shall be longer.

VI.

TO MRS. HEWET.[1]

Nov. 12 [1709].

You have not then received my letter? Well! I shall run mad. I can suffer anything rather than that you should continue to think me ungrateful. I think

[1] Later Lady Hewet.

'tis the last of pains to be thought criminal where one most desires to please, as I am sure it is always my wish to dear Mrs. Hewet.

I am very glad you have the second part of the "New Atalantis." If you have read it, will you be so good as to send it me? and in return, I promise to get you the Key to it. I know I can. But do you know what has happened to the unfortunate authoress? People are offended at the liberty she uses in her memoirs, and she is taken into custody. Miserable is the fate of writers: if they are agreeable, they are offensive; and if dull, they starve. I lament the loss of the other parts which we should have had, and have five hundred arguments at my fingers' ends to prove the ridiculousness of those creatures that think it worth while to take notice of what is only designed for diversion. After this, who will dare to give the history of Angella? I was in hopes her faint essay would have provoked some better pen to give more elegant and secret memoirs; but now she will serve as a scarecrow to frighten people from attempting anything but heavy panegyric, and we shall be teased with nothing but heroic poems, with names at length, and false characters so daubed with flattery that they are the severest kind of lampoons, for they both scandalize the writer and the subject, like that vile paper the "Tatler."

I believe, madam, you will think I have dwelt too long on this business, but I am in a violent passion about it. All the news I know is, that Mrs. Reeves is married to Colonel Sydney (if you know neither of them, I'll send you their pictures at full length), and

that giddy rake Creswell to a fortune of two thousand pounds a year. I send you the Bath lampoons. Corinna is Lady Manchester, and the other lady is Mrs. Cartwright, who they say has pawned her diamond necklace to buy Valentine a snuff-box. These wars make men so violent scarce, that these good ladies take up with the shadows of them. This is the sum total of all the news I know, and you see I am willing to divert you all in my power. I fancy the ill spelling of the lampoons will make you laugh more than the verses; indeed, I am ashamed for her who wrote them. As soon as possible, be pleased to send me the second part of the "Atalantis," etc.

VII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[*March* 28, 1710.]

PERHAPS you 'll be surprised at this letter; I have had many debates with myself before I could resolve on it. I know it is not acting in form, but I do not look upon you as I do upon the rest of the world, and by what I do for *you*, you are not to judge my manner of acting with others. You are brother to a woman I tenderly loved;[1] my protestations of friendship are not like other people's, — I never speak but what I mean; and when I say I love, 't is forever. I had that real concern for Mrs. Wortley, I look with some regard on every one that is related to her. This and my long acquaintance with you may in some

[1] Miss Wortley died shortly before the date of this letter.

measure excuse what I am now doing. I am surprised at one of the "Tatlers" you send me; is it possible to have any sort of esteem for a person one believes capable of having such trifling inclinations? Mr. Bickerstaff has very wrong notions of our sex. I can say there are some of us that despise charms of show and all the pageantry of greatness, perhaps with more ease than any of the philosophers. In contemning the world, they seem to take pains to contemn it; we despise it without taking the pains to read lessons of morality to make us do it. At least I know I have always looked upon it with contempt without being at the expense of one serious reflection to oblige me to it. I carry the matter yet further; was I to choose of two thousand pounds a year or twenty thousand, the first would be my choice. There is something of an unavoidable *embarras* in making what is called a great figure in the world, — [it] takes off from the happiness of life; I hate the noise and hurry inseparable from great estates and titles, and look upon both as blessings that ought only to be given to fools, for 't is only to them that they are blessings. The pretty fellows you speak of I own entertain me sometimes; but is it impossible to be diverted with what one despises? I can laugh at a puppet-show; at the same time I know there is nothing in it worth my attention or regard. General notions are generally wrong. Ignorance and folly are thought the best foundations for virtue, as if not knowing what a good wife is was necessary to make one so. I confess that can never be my way of reasoning; as I always forgive an *injury* when I think

it not done out of malice, I can never think myself *obliged* by what is done without design. Give me leave to say it (I know it sounds vain), I know how to make a man of sense happy; but then that man must resolve to contribute something towards it himself. I have so much esteem for you I should be very sorry to hear you was unhappy; but for the world I would not be the instrument of making you so, which (of the humor you are) is hardly to be avoided if I am your wife. You distrust me: I can neither be easy nor loved where I am distrusted. Nor do I believe your passion for me is what you pretend it; at least I am sure was I in love I could not talk as you do. Few women would have spoke so plainly as I have done; but to dissemble is among the things I never do. I take more pains to approve my conduct to myself than to the world, and would not have to accuse myself of a minute's deceit. I wish I loved you enough to devote myself to be forever miserable for the pleasure of a day or two's happiness. I cannot resolve upon it. You must think otherwise of me or not at all.

I don't enjoin you to burn this letter. I know you will.

VIII.

TO MRS. ANNE JUSTICE.[1]

[Postmark, *Aug.* 7.]

I AM very glad you direct yourself so well. I endeavor to make my solitude as agreeable as I can.

[1] From the original, lately in the possession of Mr. Boone of Bond Street. There is little in the contents to fix the date,

Most things of that kind are in the power of the mind; we may make ourselves easy if we cannot perfectly happy. The news you tell me very much surprises me. I wish Mrs. B.[1] extremely well, and hope she designs better for herself than a stolen wedding with a man who (you know) we have reason to believe not the most sincere lover upon earth; and since his estate [is] in such very bad order, I am clearly of your opinion his best course would be the army, for I suppose six or seven thousand pound (if he should get that with his mistress) would not set him up again, and there he might possibly establish his fortune, at least better it, and at worst be rid of all his cares. I wonder all the young men in England don't take that method, certainly the most profitable as well [as] the noblest. I confess I cannot believe Mrs. B. so imprudent to keep on any private correspondence with him. I much doubt her perfect happiness if she runs away with him; I fear she will have more reason than ever to say there is no such thing. I have just now received the numbers of the great lottery which is drawing; I find myself (as yet) among the unlucky, but, thank God, the great prize is not come out, and there is room for hopes still. Prithee, dear child, pray heartily for me if I win. I don't question (in spite of all our disputes) to find myself perfectly happy, my heart goes very much pit-a-pat about it,

and the letter is without signature. It is addressed "To Mrs. Anne Justice, at Mr. Justice's, on the Pavement at York, Yorkshire, by way of London." — T.

[1] Perhaps Miss Banks, an early Nottinghamshire friend. T.

but I've a horrid ill-boding mind that tells me I sha'n't win a farthing; I should be very glad to be mistaken in that case. I hear Mrs. B. has been at the Spa; I wonder you don't mention it. Adieu, my dear; pray make no more excuses about long letters, and believe yours never seem so to me.

IX.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Postmark, *April* 25, 1710.]

I HAVE this minute received your two letters. I know not how to direct to you, whether to London or the country; or, if in the country, to Durham or Wortley. 'T is very likely you 'll never receive this. I hazard a great deal if it falls into other hands, and I write for all that. I wish with all my soul I thought as you do; I endeavor to convince myself by your arguments, and am sorry my reason is so obstinate not to be deluded into an opinion that 't is impossible a man can esteem a woman. I suppose I should then be very easy at your thoughts of me; I should thank you for the wit and beauty you give me, and not be angry at the follies and weaknesses; but to my infinite affliction I can believe neither one nor t' other. One part of my character is not so good nor t' other so bad as you fancy it. Should we ever live together, you would be disappointed both ways; you would find an easy equality of temper you do not expect and a thousand faults you do not imagine.

You think if you married me, I should be passionately fond of you one month, and of somebody else the next: neither would happen. I can esteem, I can be a friend, but I don't know whether I can love. Expect all that is complaisant and easy but never what is fond in me. You judge very wrong of my heart when you suppose me capable of views of interest, and that anything could oblige me to flatter anybody. Was I the most indigent creature in the world, I should answer you as I do now without adding or diminishing. I am incapable of art, and 't is because I will not be capable of it. Could I deceive one minute, I should never regain my own good opinion; and who could bear to live with one they despised? . . .

If you can resolve to live with a companion that will have all the deference due to your superiority of good sense, and that your proposals can be agreeable to those on whom I depend, I have nothing to say against them.

As to travelling, 't is what I should do with great pleasure, and could easily quit London upon your account; but a retirement in the country is not so disagreeable to me as I know a few months would make it tiresome to you. Where people are tied for life, 't is their mutual interest not to grow weary of one another. If I had all the personal charms that I want, a face is too slight a foundation for happiness. You would be soon tired with seeing every day the same thing. Where you saw nothing else, you would have leisure to remark all the defects, — which would increase in proportion as the novelty lessened, which

is always a great charm. I should have the displeasure of seeing a coldness, which, though I could not reasonably blame you for, being involuntary, yet it would render me uneasy; and the more because I know a love may be revived which absence, inconstancy, or even infidelity has extinguished, but there is no returning from a *dégoût* given by satiety.

I should not choose to live in a crowd. I could be very well pleased to be in London without making a great figure, or seeing above eight or nine agreeable people. Apartments, table, etc., are things that never come into my head. But [I] will never think of anything without the consent of my family, and advise you not to fancy a happiness in entire solitude which you would find only fancy.

Make no answer to this, if you can like me on my own terms. 'T is not to me you must make the proposals. If not, to what purpose is our correspondence?

However, preserve me your friendship, which I think of with a great deal of pleasure and some vanity. If ever you see me married, I flatter myself you 'll see a conduct you would not be sorry your wife should imitate.

X.

TO MRS. HEWET.

[WEST DEAN? about *May*, 1710?]

MOST of the neighbors hereabouts have been to see me, but they are very few, and few of those few that are supportable, none agreeable. This part of the

world is so different from Nottinghamshire that I can hardly persuade myself it is in the same kingdom. The men here are all Sylvias, no Myrtillos. If they could express themselves so well, they would say, like him, —

> "Mille ninfe darei per una fera
> Che da Melampo mio cacciata fosse;
> Godasi queste gioje
> Chi n' ha di me più gusto; io non le sento."

Though they cannot say it in Italian verse, they often speak to that purpose in English prose over a bottle, insensible of other pleasures than hunting and drinking. The consequence of which is, the poor female part of their family being seldom permitted a coach, or at best but a couple of starved jades to drag a dirty chariot, their lords and masters having no occasion for such a machine, as their mornings are spent among hounds and the nights with as beastly companions, with what liquor they can get in this country, which is not very famous for good drink. If this management did not hinder me the company of my *she* neighbors, I should regret the absence of the Pastor Fidos, being of the opinion of Sylvia in Tasso, —

> "Altri segua i diletti dell' amore,
> Se pur v' è nell' amor alcun diletto."

I would fain persuade you to practise your Italian. I fear I shall forget to speak it for want of somebody to speak it to. Amongst the rest of the advantages I should have in your conversation (if I should be so

happy as to be with you), I would endeavor to improve in that polite language. I find you are very busy about politics; we are the same here, particularly in the pulpit, where the parsons would fain become as famous as Sacheverell.

. . . . . .

XI.

TO LADY ——.[1]

HAVING (like other undeserving people) a vast opinion of my own merits and some small faith in your sincerity, I believed it impossible you should forget me, and therefore very impudently expected a long letter from you this morning. But Heaven, which you know delights in abasing the proud, has I find decreed no such thing; and notwithstanding my vanity and your vows, I begin to fancy myself forgotten; and this epistle comes, in humble manner, to kiss your hands, and petition for the scanty alms of one little visit, though never so short. Pray, madam, for God's sake, have pity on a poor prisoner: one little visit — so may God send you a fine husband, continuance of beauty, etc. But if you deny my request, and make a jest of my tenderness (which, between friends, I do think a little upon the ridiculous), I do vow never to — but I had better not vow, for I shall certainly love you, do what you will, — though I beg you would not tell some certain people of that fond expression, who will infallibly

[1] It is not known to whom this letter was addressed.

advise you to follow the abominable maxims of no answer, ill-treatment, and so forth, not considering that such conduct is full as base as beating a poor wretch who has his hands tied, and mercy to the distressed is a mark of divine goodness. Upon which godly consideration I hope you will afford a small visit to your disconsolate.

XII.

TO THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY.[1]

[*With her Translation of Epictetus.*]

July 20, 1710.

My Lord, — Your hours are so well employed, I hardly dare offer you this trifle to look over; but then, so well am I acquainted with that sweetness of temper which accompanies your learning, I dare ever assure myself of a pardon. You have already forgiven me greater impertinencies and condescended yet further in giving me instructions and bestowing some of your minutes in teaching me. This surprising humility has all the effect it ought to have on my heart; I am sensible of the gratitude I owe to so much goodness and how much I am ever bound to be your servant. Here is the work of one week of my solitude, — by the many faults in it your lordship

[1] The celebrated Burnet, the chaplain of William III. and author of "History of Our Own Times." Lady Mary preserved her feeling of gratitude and admiration for him all her life.

will easily believe I spent no more time upon it. It was hardly finished when I was obliged to begin my journey, and I had not leisure to write it over again. You have it here without any corrections, with all its blots and errors; I endeavored at no beauty of style, but to keep as literally as I could to the sense of the author. My only intention in presenting it is to ask your lordship whether I have understood Epictetus. The fourth chapter, particularly, I am afraid I have mistaken. Piety and greatness of soul set you above all misfortunes that can happen to yourself, and the calumnies of false tongues; but that same piety which renders what happens to yourself indifferent to you yet softens the natural compassion in your temper to the greatest degree of tenderness for the interests of the Church and the liberty and welfare of your country. The steps that are now made towards the destruction of both, the apparent danger we are in, the manifest growth of injustice, oppression, and hypocrisy, cannot do otherwise than give your lordship those hours of sorrow, which, did not your fortitude of soul and reflections from religion and philosophy shorten, would add to the national misfortunes by injuring the health of so great a supporter of our sinking liberties. I ought to ask pardon for this digression; it is more proper for me in this place to say something to excuse an address that looks so very presuming. My sex is usually forbid studies of this nature, and folly reckoned so much our proper sphere we are sooner pardoned any excesses of that than the least pretensions to reading or good sense. We are permitted no books but such as tend to the

weakening and effeminating of the mind. Our natural defects are every way indulged, and it is looked upon as in a degree criminal to improve our reason, or fancy we have any. We are taught to place all our art in adorning our outward forms, and permitted without reproach to carry that custom even to extravagancy, while our minds are entirely neglected, and by disuse of reflections filled with nothing but the trifling objects our eyes are daily entertained with. This custom, so long established and industriously upheld, makes it even ridiculous to go out of the common road, and forces one to find as many excuses as if it was a thing altogether criminal not to play the fool in concert with other women of quality, whose birth and leisure only serve to render them the most useless and most worthless part of the creation. There is hardly a character in the world more despicable or more liable to universal ridicule than that of a learned woman; those words imply, according to the received sense, a tattling, impertinent, vain, and conceited creature. I believe nobody will deny that learning may have this effect, but it must be a very superficial degree of it. Erasmus was certainly a man of great learning and good sense, and he seems to have my opinion of it when he says, "Foemina qui [*sic*] vere sapit, non videtur sibi sapere; contra, quae cum nihil sapiat sibi videtur sapere, ea demum bis stulta est." The Abbé Bellegarde gives a right reason for women's talking over-much; they know nothing, and every outward object strikes their imagination and produces a multitude of thoughts, which, if they knew more, they would know not worth their

thinking of. I am not now arguing for an equality of the two sexes. I do not doubt God and Nature have thrown us into an inferior rank; we are a lower part of the creation, we owe obedience and submission to the superior sex, and any woman who suffers her vanity and folly to deny this rebels against the law of the Creator and indisputable order of Nature: but there is a worse effect than this, which follows the careless education given to women of quality, — its being so easy for any man of sense that finds it either his interest or his pleasure to corrupt them. The common method is to begin by attacking their religion. They bring them a thousand fallacious arguments their excessive ignorance hinders them from refuting; and I speak now from my own knowledge and conversation among them, there are more atheists among the fine ladies than the loosest sort of rakes, and the same ignorance that generally works out into excess of superstition exposes them to the snares of any who have a fancy to carry them to t'other extreme. I have made my excuses already too long, and will conclude in the words of Erasmus: "Vulgus sentit quod lingua Latina non convenit foeminis, quia parum facit ad tuendam illarum pudicitiam quoniam rarum et insolitum est foeminam scire Latinam; attamen consuetudo omnium malarum rerum magistra. Decorum est foeminam in Germania nata [*sic*] discere Gallice, ut loquatur cum his qui sciunt Gallice; cur igitur habetur indecorum discere Latine, ut quotidie confabuletur cum tot autoribus tam facundis, tam eruditis, tam sapientibus, tam fidis consultoribus? Certe mihi quantulumcunque cerebri est, malim in

bonis studiis consumere, quam in precibus sine mente dictis, in pernoctibus conviviis, in exhauriendis capacibus pateris," etc.

I have tired your lordship, and too long delayed to subscribe myself

Your lordship's most respectful and obliged.

XIII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.[1]

[Indorsed 14th *November*, 1710.]

I AM going to comply with your request and write with all the plainness I am capable of. I know what may be said upon such a proceeding, but am sure you will not say it. Why should you always put the worst construction upon my words? Believe me what you will, but do not believe I can be ungenerous or ungrateful. I wish I could tell you what answer you will receive from some people, or upon what terms. If my opinion could sway, nothing should displease you. Nobody ever was so disinterested as I am. I would not have to reproach myself (I don't suppose you would) that I had any way made you uneasy in your circumstances. Let me beg you (which I do with the utmost sincerity) only to consider yourself in this affair; and since I am so unfortunate to have nothing in my own disposal, do not

[1] Mr. Wortley Montagu had already proposed for her hand, but the negotiation was like to be wrecked on the question of settlements. Mr. Wortley Montagu, in the interval, had gone abroad and was just returned.

think I have any hand in making settlements. People in my way are sold like slaves, and I cannot tell what price my master will put on me. If you do agree, I shall endeavor to contribute as much as lies in my power to your happiness. I so heartily despise a great figure, I have no notion of spending money so foolishly, though one had a great deal to throw away. If this breaks off, I shall not complain of you; and as, whatever happens, I shall still preserve the opinion you have behaved yourself well, let me entreat you, if I have committed any follies, to forgive them; and be so just to think I would not do an ill thing.

I say nothing of my letters; I think them entirely safe in your hands.

I shall be uneasy till I know this is come to you. I have tried to write plainly. I know not what one can say more upon paper.

XIV.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[About *November*, 1710.]

INDEED I do not at all wonder that absence and variety of new faces should make you forget me; but I am a little surprised at your curiosity to know what passes in my heart (a thing wholly insignificant to you), except you propose to yourself a piece of ill-natured satisfaction in finding me very much disquieted. . . .

I begin to be tired of my humility; I have carried my complaisances to you farther than I ought. You

make new scruples; you have a great deal of fancy, and your distrusts being all of your own making are more immovable than if there was some real ground for them. Our aunts and grandmothers always tell us that men are a sort of animals, that, if ever they are constant, 't is only where they are ill used. 'T was a kind of paradox I could never believe; experience has taught me the truth of it. You are the first I ever had a correspondence with, and I thank God I have done with it for all my life. You needed not to have told me you are not what you have been; one must be stupid not to find a difference in your letters. You seem, in one part of your last, to excuse yourself from having done me any injury in point of fortune. Do I accuse you of any?

I have not spirits to dispute any longer with you. You say you are not yet determined: let me determine for you, and save you the trouble of writing again. Adieu forever! make no answer. I wish among the variety of acquaintance you may find some one to please you, and can't help the vanity of thinking, should you try them all, you won't find one that will be so sincere in their treatment, though a thousand more deserving, and every one happier. 'T is a piece of vanity and injustice I never forgive in a woman to delight to give pain; what must I think of a man that takes pleasure in making me uneasy? After the folly of letting you know it is in your power, I ought in prudence to let this go no farther, except I thought you had good nature enough never to make use of that power. I have no reason to think so:

however, I am willing, you see, to do you the highest obligation 't is possible for me to do, — that is, to give you a fair occasion of being rid of me.

XV.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

March 24 [1711].

THOUGH your letter is far from what I expected, having once promised to answer it, with the sincere account of my inmost thoughts, I am resolved you shall not find me worse than my word, which is (whatever you may think) inviolable.

'T is no affectation to say I despise the pleasure of pleasing people that I despise. All the fine equipages that shine in the Ring[1] never gave me another thought than either pity or contempt for the owners that could place happiness in attracting the eyes of strangers. Nothing touches me with satisfaction but what touches my heart; and I should find more pleasure in the secret joy I should feel at a kind expression from a friend I esteemed than at the admiration of a whole playhouse, or the envy of those of my own sex who could not attain to the same number of jewels, fine clothes, etc., supposing I was at the very top of this sort of happiness.

You may be this friend if you please. Did you really esteem me, had you any tender regard for me, I could I think pass my life in any station happier

[1] The fashionable drive in Hyde Park.

with you than in all the grandeur of the world with any other. You have some humors that would be disagreeable to any woman that married with an intention of finding her happiness abroad. That is not my resolution. If I marry, I propose to myself a retirement; there is few of my acquaintance I should ever wish to see again; and the pleasing one, and only one, is the way I design to please myself. Happiness is the natural design of all the world, and everything we see done is meant in order to attain it. My imagination places it in friendship. By friendship I mean an entire communication of thoughts, wishes, interests, and pleasures, being undivided; a mutual esteem, which naturally carries with it a pleasing sweetness of conversation, and terminates in the desire of making one or another happy, without being forced to run into visits, noise, and hurry, which serve rather to trouble than compose the thoughts of any reasonable creature. There are few capable of a friendship such as I have described, and 't is necessary for the generality of the world to be taken up with trifles. Carry a fine lady and a fine gentleman out of town, and they know no more what to say. To take from them plays, operas, and fashions is taking away all their topics of discourse, and they know not how to form their thoughts on any other subjects. They know very well what it is to be admired but are perfectly ignorant of what it is to be loved. I take you to have sense enough not to think this scheme romantic. I rather choose to use the word friendship than love, because, in the general sense that word is spoke, it signifies a passion rather

founded on fancy than reason; and when I say friendship, I mean a mixture of tenderness and esteem, and which a long acquaintance increases, not decays. How far I deserve such a friendship I can be no judge of myself. I may want the good sense that is necessary to be agreeable to a man of merit, but I know I want the vanity to believe I have [it]; and can promise you shall never like me less upon knowing me better, and that I shall never forget you have a better understanding than myself.

And now let me entreat you to think (if possible) tolerably of my modesty after so bold a declaration. I am resolved to throw off reserve, and use me ill if you please. I am sensible, to own an inclination for a man is putting one's self wholly in his power; but sure you have generosity enough not to abuse it. After all I have said, I pretend no tie but on your heart. If you do not love me, I shall not be happy with you; if you do, I need add no farther. I am not mercenary, and would not receive an obligation that comes not from one that loves me.

I do not desire my letter back again; you have honor, and I dare trust you.

I am going to the same place I went last spring. I shall think of you there, — it depends upon you in what manner.

XVI.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Indorsed 9 *April*, 1711.]

I THOUGHT to return no answer to your letter, but I find I am not so wise as I thought myself. I cannot forbear fixing my mind a little on that expression, though perhaps the only insincere one in your whole letter, — I would die to be secure of your heart, though but for a moment. Were this but true, what is there I would not do to secure you?

I will state the case to you as plainly as I can, and then ask yourself if you use me well. I have showed in every action of my life an esteem for you that at least challenges a grateful regard. I have trusted my reputation in your hands; I have made no scruple of giving you under my own hand an assurance of my friendship. After all this, I exact nothing from you. If you find it inconvenient for your affairs to take so small a fortune, I desire you to sacrifice nothing to me; I pretend no tie upon your honor, but in recompense for so clear and so disinterested a proceeding, must I ever receive injuries and ill usage?

I have not the usual pride of my sex. I can bear being told I am in the wrong; but tell it me gently. Perhaps I have been indiscreet; I came young into the hurry of the world. A great innocence and an undesigning gayety may possibly have been construed coquetry and a desire of being followed, — though never meant by me. I cannot answer for the [reflec-

tions] that may be made on me. All who are malicious attack the careless and defenceless: I own myself to be both. I know not anything I can say more to show my perfect desire of pleasing you and making you easy than to proffer to be confined with you in what manner you please. Would any woman but me renounce all the world for one? or would any man but you be insensible of such a proof of sincerity?

XVII.

TO MRS. HEWET.

[1711.]

'T is so long since I had a letter from dear Mrs. Hewet, I should think her no longer in the land of the living, if Mr. Resingade did not assure me he was happier than I and had heard of your health from your own hand; which makes me fancy that my last miscarried, and perhaps you are blaming me at the same time that you are thinking me neglectful of you. Apropos of Mr. Resingade, we are grown such good friends, I assure you, that we write Italian letters to each other and I have the pleasure of talking to him of Madame Hewet. He told me he would send you the two tomes of Madame de Noyers'[1] Memoirs. I fancy you will find yourself disappointed in them, for they are horribly grave and insipid; and instead of the gallantry you might expect, they are full of dull morals. I was last Thurs-

[1] Mémoires de Mme. Dunoyer.

day at the new Opera, and saw Nicolini[1] strangle a lion with great gallantry. But he represented nakedness so naturally I was surprised to see those ladies stare at him without any confusion that pretend to be so violently shocked at a poor *double entendre* or two in a comedy, — which convinced me that those prudes who would cry fie! fie! at the word *naked* have no scruples about the thing. The marriage of Lord Willoughby goes on, and he swears he will bring the lady down to Nottingham races. How far it may be true, I cannot tell. By what fine gentlemen say, you know, it is not easy to guess at what they mean. The lady has made an acquaintance with me after the manner of Pyramus and Thisbe, — I mean over a wall three yards high, which separates our garden from Lady Guildford's. The young ladies had found out a way to pull out two or three bricks and so climb up and hang their chins over the wall, where we, mounted on chairs, used to have many *belles conversations à la dérobée* for fear of the old mother. This trade continued several days. But fortune seldom permits long pleasures. By long standing on the wall, the bricks loosened, and one fatal morning down drops Miss Nelly; and to complete this misfortune, she fell into a little sink, and bruised her poor self to that terrible degree she is forced to have surgeons, plasters, and God knows what, which discovered the whole intrigue; and their mamma forbade them ever to visit us but by the door. Since that time, all our communications have been made in a vulgar manner,

[1] See Spectator, March 15, 1710–11.

visiting in coaches, etc., which took away half the pleasure. You know danger gives a *haut goût* to everything. This is our secret history, — pray let it be so still, — but I hope all the world will know that I am most entirely yours.

XVIII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[About *July* 4, 1712.]

I AM going to write you a plain long letter. What I have already told you is nothing but the truth. I have no reason to believe I am going to be otherwise confined than by my duty; but I, that know my own mind, know that is enough to make me miserable. I see all the misfortune of marrying where it is impossible to love; I am going to confess a weakness may perhaps add to your contempt of me. I wanted courage to resist at first the will of my relations; but as every day added to my fears, those at last grew strong enough to make me venture the disobliging them. A harsh word damps my spirits to a degree of silencing all I have to say. I knew the folly of my own temper and took the method of writing to the disposer of me. I said everything in this letter I thought proper to move him, and proffered in atonement for not marrying whom he would, never to marry

[1] By this time all treaty of marriage had been broken off between Mr. Wortley Montagu and the Marquis of Dorchester. Both were angry, and Mr. Wortley Montagu had proposed an elopement to Lady Mary.

at all. He did not think fit to answer this letter, but sent for me to him. He told me he was very much surprised that I did not depend on his judgment for my future happiness; that he knew nothing I had to complain of, etc.; that he did not doubt I had some other fancy in my head, which encouraged me to this disobedience; but he assured me, if I refused a settlement he had provided for me, he gave me his word, whatever proposals were made him, he would never so much as enter into a treaty with any other; that, if I founded any hopes upon his death, I should find myself mistaken, he never intended to leave me anything but an annuity of four hundred pounds per annum; that, though another would proceed in this manner after I had given so just a pretence for it, yet he had [the] goodness to leave my destiny yet in my own choice, and at the same time commanded me to communicate my design to my relations, and ask their advice. As hard as this may sound, it did not shock my resolution; I was pleased to think at any price I had it in my power to be free from a man I hated. I told my intention to all my nearest relations. I was surprised at their blaming it to the greatest degree. I was told they were sorry I would ruin myself; but if I was so unreasonable, they could not blame my F. [father] whatever he inflicted on me. I objected I did not love him. They made answer they found no necessity of loving; if I lived well with him, that was all was required of me; and that if I considered this town, I should find very few women in love with their husbands, and yet a many happy. It was in vain to dispute with such prudent people; they

looked upon me as a little romantic, and I found it impossible to persuade them that living in London at liberty was not the height of happiness. However, they could not change my thoughts, though I found I was to expect no protection from them. When I was to give my final answer to ——,[1] I told him that I preferred a single life to any other; and if he pleased to permit me, I would take that resolution. He replied he could not hinder my resolutions, but I should not pretend after that to please him, since pleasing him was only to be done by obedience; that if I would disobey, I knew the consequences, — he would not fail to confine me where I might repent at leisure; that he had also consulted my relations and found them all agreeing in his sentiments. He spoke this in a manner hindered my answering. I retired to my chamber, where I writ a letter to let him know my aversion to the man proposed was too great to be overcome, that I should be miserable beyond all things could be imagined, but I was in his hands, and he might dispose of me as he thought fit. He was perfectly satisfied with this answer, and proceeded as if I had given a willing consent. I forgot to tell you he named you, and said if I thought that way, I was very much mistaken; that if he had no other engagements, yet he would never have agreed to your proposals, having no inclination to see his grandchildren beggars.

I do not speak this to endeavor to alter your opinion, but to show the improbability of his agree-

[1] It does not appear who the lover of Lady Mary was. Mr. Thomas believes that he had estates in Ireland.

ing to it. I confess I am entirely of your mind. I reckon it among the absurdities of custom that a man must be obliged to settle his whole estate on an eldest son beyond his power to recall, whatever he proves to be, and make himself unable to make happy a younger child that may deserve to be so. If I had an estate myself, I should not make such ridiculous settlements, and I cannot blame you for being in the right.

I have told you all my affairs with a plain sincerity. I have avoided to move your compassion, and I have said nothing of what I suffer; and I have not persuaded you to a *treaty*, which I am sure my family will never agree to. I can have no fortune without an entire obedience.

Whatever your business is, may it end to your satisfaction. I think of the public as you do. As little as *that* is a woman's care, it may be permitted into the number of a woman's fears. But wretched as I am, I have no more to fear for myself. I have still a concern for my friends, and I am in pain for your danger. I am far from taking ill what you say. I never valued myself as the daughter of —— and ever despised those that esteemed me on that account. With pleasure I could barter all that, and change to be any country gentleman's daughter that would have reason enough to make happiness in privacy. My letter is too long. I beg your pardon. You may see by the situation of my affairs 't is without design.

XIX.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Tuesday night [*Aug.*, 1712].

I RECEIVED both your Monday letters since I writ the enclosed, which however I send you. The kind letter was writ and sent Friday morning and I did not receive yours till the Saturday noon; or, to speak truth, you would never have had it, there were so many things in yours to put me out of humor. Thus, you see, it was on no design to repair anything that offended you. You only show me how industrious you are to find imaginary faults in me. Why will you not suffer me to be pleased with you?

I would see you if I could (though perhaps it may be wrong); but in the way I am here, 't is impossible. I can't come to town but in company with my sister-in-law; I can carry her nowhere but where she pleases; or if I could, I would trust her with nothing. I could not walk out alone without giving suspicion to the whole family; should I be watched and seen to meet a man — judge of the consequence!

You speak of treating with my father, as if you believed he would come to terms afterwards. I will not suffer you to remain in that thought, however advantageous it might be to me; I will deceive you in nothing. I am fully persuaded he will never hear of terms afterwards. You may say 't is talking oddly of him. I can't answer to that; but 't is my real opinion, and I think I know him. You talk to me

of estates, as if I was the most interested woman in the world. Whatever faults I may have shown in my life, I know not one action of it that ever proved me mercenary. I think there cannot be a greater proof of the contrary than treating with you where I am to depend entirely on your generosity, at the same time that I have settled on me five hundred pounds per annum pin-money and a considerable jointure in another place; not to reckon that I may have by his temper what command of his estate I please, and with you I have nothing to pretend to. I do not, however, make a merit of this to you; money is very little to me, because all beyond necessaries I do not value that is to [be] purchased by it. If the man proposed to me had ten thousand pounds per annum and I was sure to dispose of it all, I should act just as I do. I have in my life known a good deal of show and never found myself the happier for it.

In proposing to you to follow the scheme begun with that friend, I think 't is absolutely necessary for both our sakes. I would have you want no pleasure which a single life would afford you. You own that you think nothing so agreeable. A woman that adds nothing to a man's fortune ought not to take from his happiness. If possible, I would add to it; but I will not take from you any satisfaction you could enjoy without me. On my own side, I endeavor to form as right a judgment of the temper of human nature, and of my own in particular, as I am capable of. I would throw off all partiality and passion, and be calm in my opinion. Almost all people are apt to run into a

mistake that when they once feel or give a passion, there needs nothing to entertain it. This mistake makes, in the number of women that inspire even violent passions, hardly one preserve[s] one after possession. If we marry, our happiness must consist in loving one another: 't is principally my concern to think of the most probable method of making that love eternal. You object against living in London; I am not fond of it myself, and readily give it up to you, though I am assured there needs more art to keep a fondness alive in solitude, where it generally preys upon itself. There is one article absolutely necessary — to be ever beloved, one must be ever agreeable. There is no such thing as being agreeable without a thorough good humor, a natural sweetness of temper, enlivened by cheerfulness. Whatever natural fund of gayety one is born with, 't is necessary to be entertained with agreeable objects. Anybody capable of tasting pleasure, when they confine themselves to one place should take care 't is the place in the world the most pleasing. Whatever you may now think (now perhaps you have some fondness for me), though your love should continue in its full force, there are hours when the most beloved mistress would be troublesome. People are not [for] ever — nor is it in human nature they should be — disposed to be fond; you would be glad to find in me the friend and the companion. To be agreeably this last, it is necessary to be gay and entertaining. A perpetual solitude in a place where you see nothing to raise your spirits, at length wears them out, and conversation insensibly falls into dullness and

insipidity. When I have no more to say to you you will like me no longer. How dreadful is that view! You will reflect for my sake you have abandoned the conversation of a friend that you liked and your situation in a country where all things would have contributed to make your life pass in (the true *volupté*) a smooth tranquillity. *I* shall lose the vivacity that should entertain you, and you will have nothing to recompense you for what you have lost. Very few people that have settled entirely in the country but have grown at length weary of one another. The lady's conversation generally falls into a thousand impertinent effects of idleness; and the gentleman falls *in* love with his dogs and horses, and *out* of love with everything else. I am not now arguing in favor of the town; you have answered me as to that point. In respect of your health, 't is the first thing to be considered, and I shall never ask you to do anything injurious to that. But 't is my opinion, 't is necessary to being happy that we neither of us think any place more agreeable than where we are. I have nothing to do in London and 't is indifferent to me if I never see it more. I know not how to answer your mentioning gallantry, nor in what sense to understand you. I am sure in one, — whoever I marry, when I am married, I renounce all things of that kind. I am willing to abandon all conversation but yours. If you please I will never see another man. In short, I will part with anything for you but you. I will not have you a month to lose you for the rest of my life. If you can pursue the plan of happiness begun with your friend and take me for that

friend, I am ever yours. I have examined my own heart whether I can leave everything for you; I think I can. If I change my mind you shall know before Sunday; after that I will not change my mind. If 't is necessary for your affairs to stay in England to assist your father in his business, as I suppose the time will be short, I would be as little injurious to your fortune as I can, and I will do it. But I am still of opinion nothing is so likely to make us both happy as what I propose. I foresee I may break with you on this point, and I shall certainly be displeased with myself for it and wish a thousand times that I had done whatever you pleased; but, however, I hope I shall always remember how much more miserable than anything else could make me should I be to live with you and to please you no longer. You can be pleased with nothing when you are not pleased with yourself. One of the "Spectators" is very just that says, "A man ought always to be on his guard against spleen and too severe a philosophy; a woman against levity and coquetry." If we go to Naples I will make no acquaintance there of any kind, and you will be in a place where a variety of agreeable objects will dispose you to be ever pleased. If such a thing is possible this will secure our everlasting happiness; and I am ready to wait on you without leaving a thought behind me.

XX.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Friday night [15th *Aug.*, 1712].

I TREMBLE for what we are doing. Are you sure you will love me forever? Shall we never repent? I fear and I hope. I foresee all that will happen on this occasion. I shall incense my family in the highest degree. The generality of the world will blame my conduct, and the relations and friends of ——[1] will invent a thousand stories of me; yet 't is possible you may recompense everything to me. In this letter, which I am fond of, you promise me all that I wish. Since I writ so far I received your Friday letter. I will be only yours, and I will do what you please.

You shall hear from me again to-morrow, not to contradict but to give some directions. My resolution is taken. Love me and use me well.[2]

[1] Her proposed husband.

[2] Mr. Wortley Montagu and Lady Mary Pierrepont were married very soon after this letter. Their marriage license is dated August 16; but at the last moment Lord Dorchester became suspicious, and Lady Mary was promptly bundled to West Dean. Mr. Wortley followed her, and, aided by her brother, succeeded in carrying her away.

XXI.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

WALLING WELLS,[1] *Oct.* 22 [1712], which is the first post I could write, Monday night being so fatigued and sick I went straight to bed from the coach.

I DON'T know very well how to begin; I am perfectly unacquainted with a proper matrimonial style. After all, I think 't is best to write as if we were not married at all. I lament your absence, as if you was still my lover, and I am impatient to hear you are got safe to Durham, and that you have fixed a time for your return.

I have not been very long in this family; and I fancy myself in that described in the "Spectator." The good people here look upon their children with a fondness that more than recompenses their care of them. I don't perceive much distinction in regard to their merits; and when they speak sense or nonsense, it affects the parents with almost the same pleasure. My friendship for the mother and kind-

[1] Mr. Thomas says: "Her brother, who had accompanied her into Wiltshire, appears to have shrunk from the responsibility of actually aiding their flight; but they had a firm friend in Mrs. Anne Thistlethwayte of Winterslow, close by, the lady to whom some of the letters from the East were addressed, and in Grace, Lady Mary's attendant, who no doubt fled with her mistress and was the 'Grace,' her serving-woman, mentioned in the letters written in the early years of their wedded life." Lord Kingston, however, was a passive abettor.

ness for Miss Biddy make me endure the squalling of Miss Nanny and Miss Mary with abundance of patience; and my foretelling the future conquests of the eldest daughter makes me very well with the family. I don't know whether you will presently find out that this seeming impertinent account is the tenderest expressions of my love to you, but it furnishes my imagination with agreeable pictures of our future life; and I flatter myself with the hopes of one day enjoying with you the same satisfactions; and that, after as many years together, I may see you retain the same fondness for me as I shall certainly mine for you, and the noise of a nursery may have more charms for us than the music of an opera.

[*Torn*] as these are the sure effect of my sincere love, since 'tis the nature of that passion to entertain the mind with pleasures in prospect; and I check myself when I grieve for your absence by remembering how much reason I have to rejoice in the hope of passing my whole life with you. A good fortune not to be valued! I am afraid of telling you that I return thanks for it to Heaven, because you will charge me with hypocrisy; but you are mistaken. I assist every day at public prayers in this family, and never forget in my private ejaculations how much I owe to Heaven for making me yours. 'T is candle-light or I should not conclude so soon.

Pray, my dear, begin at the top, and read till you come to the bottom.

XXII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[HINCHINBROOK, Indorsed, *Dec.* 1712.]

I AM alone, without any amusements to take up my thoughts. I am in circumstances in which melancholy is apt to prevail even over all amusements, dispirited and alone, and you write me quarrelling letters.

I hate complaining; 't is no sign I am easy that I do not trouble you with my headaches and my spleen; to be reasonable one should never complain but when one hopes redress. A physician should be the only confidant of bodily pains; and for those of the mind, they should never be spoke of but to those that can and will relieve 'em. Should I tell you that I am uneasy, that I am out of humor and out of patience, should I see you half an hour the sooner? I believe you have kindness enough for me to be very sorry, and so you would tell me, and things remain in their primitive state. I choose to spare you that pain; I would always give you pleasure. I know you are ready to tell me that I do not ever keep to these good maxims. I confess I often speak impertinently, but I always repent of it. My last stupid letter was not come to you before I would have had it back again had it been in my power; such as it was, I beg your pardon for it. I did not expect that my Lord P. [Pierrepont] would speak at all in our favor, much less show zeal upon that occasion, that never

showed any in his life. I have writ every post, and you accuse me without reason. I can't imagine how they should miscarry ; perhaps you have by this time received two together. Adieu ! je suis à vous de tout mon cœur.

XXIII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Indorsed *Aug.* 7, 1714.]

You made me cry two hours last night. I cannot imagine why you use me so ill ; for what reason you continue silent, when you know at any time your silence cannot fail of giving me a great deal of pain ; and now to a higher degree because of the perplexity that I am in, without knowing where you are, what you are doing, or what to do with myself and my dear little boy. However (persuaded there can be no objection to it), I intend to go to-morrow to Castle Howard, and remain there with the young ladies, till I know when I shall see you or what you would command. The archbishop and everybody else are gone to London. We are alarmed with a story of a fleet being seen from the coasts of Scotland. An express went from thence through York to the Earl of Mar. I beg you would write to me. Till you do I shall not have an easy minute. I am sure I do not deserve from you that you should make me uneasy. I find I am scolding. 'T is better for me not to trouble you with it, but I cannot help taking your silence very unkindly.

XXIV.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Indorsed *Nov.* 24, 1714.]

I HAVE taken up and laid down my pen several times, very much unresolved in what style I ought to write to you. For once I suffer my inclination to get the better of my reason. I have not oft opportunities of indulging myself, and I will do it in this one letter. I know very well that nobody was ever teased into a liking, and 't is perhaps harder to revive a past one than to overcome an aversion; but I cannot forbear any longer telling you I think you use me very unkindly. I don't say so much of your absence as I should do if you was in the country and I in London, because I would not have you believe I am impatient to be in town when I say I am impatient to be with you; but I am very sensible I parted with you in July and 't is now the middle of November. As if this was not hardship enough, you do not tell me you are sorry for it. You write seldom and with so much indifference as shows you hardly think of me at all. I complain of ill-health, and you only say you hope 't is not so bad as I make it. You never inquire after your child. I would fain flatter myself you have more kindness for me and him than you express, but I reflect with grief a man that is ashamed of passions that are natural and reasonable is generally proud of those that [are] shameful and silly.

You should consider solitude, and spleen the consequence of solitude, is apt to give the most melan-

choly ideas, and there needs at least tender letters and kind expressions to hinder uneasiness almost inseparable from absence. I am very sensible how far I ought to be contented when your affairs oblige you to be without me. I would not have you do them any prejudice, but a little kindness will cost you nothing. I do not bid you lose anything by hasting to see me, but I would have you think it a misfortune when we are asunder. Instead of that, you seem perfectly pleased with our separation, and indifferent how long it continues. When I reflect on all your behavior, I am ashamed of my own; I think I am playing the part of my Lady Winchester.[1] At least be as generous as my lord; and as he made her an early confession of his aversion, own to me your inconstancy, and upon my word I will give you no more trouble about it. I have concealed as long as I can the uneasiness the nothingness of your letters has given me under an affected indifference; but dissimulation always sits awkwardly upon me; I am weary of it, and must beg you to write to me no more, if you cannot bring yourself to write otherwise. Multiplicity of business or diversions may have engaged you, but all people find time to do what they have a mind to. If your inclination is gone, I had rather never receive a letter from you than one which, in lieu of comfort for your absence, gives me a pain even beyond it. For my part, as 't is my first, this is my last complaint, and your next of the kind shall go back enclosed to you in blank paper.

[1] Lady Anne Vaughan, a great heiress who married the Marquis of Winchester, afterward Duke of Bolton. The marriage was notoriously unhappy, and the pair separated.

XXV.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

[Indorsed *April*, 1716.]

I AM extremely concerned at your illness. I have expected you all this day, and supposed you would be here by this time if you had set out Saturday afternoon as you say you intended. I hope you have left Wharncliffe, but however will continue to write till you let me know you have done so. Dr. Clarke has been spoke to, and excused himself from recommending a chaplain,[1] as not being acquainted with many orthodox divines. I don't doubt you know the death of Lord Somers, which will for some time interrupt my commerce with Lady Jekyl. I have heard he is dead without a will, and I have heard he has made young Mr. Cox his heir; I cannot tell which account is the truest. I beg of you with great earnestness that you would take the first care of your health; there can be nothing worth the least loss of it. I shall be sincerely very uneasy till I hear from you again, but I am not without hopes of seeing you to-morrow. Your son presents his duty to you, and improves every day in his conversation, which begins to be very entertaining to me. I directed a letter for you last post to Mr. B ——. I cannot conclude without once [more] recommending to you, if you have any sort of value for me, to take care of yourself. If there be anything you would have me do,

[1] A chaplain to the embassy to Constantinople.

pray be particular in your directions. You say nothing positive about the liveries. Lord B.'s lace is silk with very little silver in it, but for twenty liveries comes to one hundred and ten pounds. Adieu! pray take care of your health.

XXVI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF —— [MAR].[1]

ROTTERDAM, Friday, *Aug.* 3, O. S. [1716].

I FLATTER myself, dear sister, that I shall give you some pleasure in letting you know that I have safely passed the sea, though we had the ill fortune of a storm. We were persuaded by the captain of our yacht to set out in a calm, and he pretended that there was nothing so easy as to tide it over; but after two days slowly moving, the wind blew so hard that none of the sailors could keep their feet, and we were all Sunday night tossed very handsomely. I never saw a man more frighted than the captain.

For my part I have been so lucky neither to suffer from fear or sea-sickness, though I confess I was so impatient to see myself once more upon dry land that I would not stay till the yacht could get to Rotterdam, but went in the long-boat to Helvoetsluys, where we had voitures to carry us to the Brill.

[1] She was Lady Frances Pierrepont and Lady Mary's favorite sister. She married the Earl of Mar, a professed Jacobite, but an actual spy of the English government. He was a man of indifferent character, and made his wife most unhappy.

I was charmed with the neatness of that little town; but my arrival at Rotterdam presented me a new scene of pleasure. All the streets are paved with broad stones, and before the meanest artificers' doors seats of various-colored marbles, and so neatly kept that I will assure you I walked almost all over the town yesterday, *incognita*, in my slippers without receiving one spot of dirt; and you may see the Dutch maids washing the pavement of the street with more application than ours do our bed-chambers. The town seems so full of people with such busy faces, all in motion, that I can hardly fancy that it is not some celebrated fair; but I see it is every day the same. 'T is certain no town can be more advantageously situated for commerce. Here are seven large canals, on which the merchants' ships come up to the very doors of their houses. The shops and warehouses are of a surprising neatness and magnificence, filled with an incredible quantity of fine merchandise, and so much cheaper than what we see in England, I have much ado to persuade myself I am still so near it. Here is neither dirt nor beggary to be seen. One is not shocked with those loathsome cripples, so common in London, nor teased with the importunities of idle fellows and wenches that choose to be nasty and lazy. The common servants and little shopwomen here are more nicely clean than most of our ladies; and the great variety of neat dresses (every woman dressing her head after her own fashion) is an additional pleasure in seeing the town.

You see hitherto, dear sister, I make no complaints; and if I continue to like travelling as well as I do at

present, I shall not repent my project. It will go a great way in making me satisfied with it, if it affords me opportunities of entertaining you. But it is not from Holland that you must expect a disinterested offer. I can write enough in the style of Rotterdam to tell you plainly, in one word, I expect returns of all the London news. You see I have already learnt to make a good bargain, and that it is not for nothing I will so much as tell you that I am your affectionate sister.

XXVII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF —— [MAR].

VIENNA, *Sept.* 8, O. S. [1716].

I AM now, my dear sister, safely arrived at Vienna; and, I thank God, have not at all suffered in my health, nor (what is dearer to me) in that of my child,[1] by all our fatigues.

We travelled by water from Ratisbon, a journey perfectly agreeable, down the Danube, in one of those little vessels that they very properly call wooden houses, having in them almost all the conveniences of a palace, stoves in the chambers, kitchens, etc. They are rowed by twelve men each, and move with an incredible swiftness, that in the same day you have the pleasure of a vast variety of prospects; and within a few hours' space of time one has the different diversion of seeing a populous city adorned with magnificent palaces and the most romantic solitudes,

[1] The little Edward was now three years old.

which appear distant from the commerce of mankind, the banks of the Danube being charmingly diversified with woods, rocks, mountains covered with vines, fields of corn, large cities, and ruins of ancient castles. I saw the great towns of Passau and Lintz, famous for the retreat of the Imperial Court when Vienna was besieged.

This town, which has the honor of being the emperor's residence, did not at all answer my ideas of it, being much less than I expected to find it. The streets are very close, and so narrow one cannot observe the fine fronts of the palaces, though many of them very well deserve observation, being truly magnificent, all built of fine white stone, and excessive high, — the town being so much too little for the number of the people that desire to live in it, the builders seem to have projected to repair that misfortune by clapping one town on the top of another, most of the houses being of five and some of them of six stories. You may easily imagine that the streets being so narrow the upper rooms are extremely dark; and what is an inconveniency much more intolerable in my opinion, there is no house that has so few as five or six families in it. The apartments of the greatest ladies, and even of the ministers of state, are divided but by a partition from that of a tailor or a shoemaker; and I know nobody that has above two floors in any house, one for their own use and one higher for their servants. Those that have houses of their own let out the rest of them to whoever will take them; thus the great stairs (which are all of stone) are as common and as dirty as the street.

'T is true when you have once travelled through them, nothing can be more surprisingly magnificent than the apartments. They are commonly a *suite* of eight or ten large rooms, all inlaid, the doors and windows richly carved and gilt, and the furniture such as is seldom seen in the palaces of sovereign princes in other countries, — the hangings the finest tapestry of Brussels, prodigious large looking-glasses in silver frames, fine Japan tables, beds, chairs, canopies, and window-curtains of the richest Genoa damask or velvet, almost covered with gold lace or embroidery; the whole made gay by pictures and vast jars of Japan china, and almost in every room large lustres of rock crystal.

I have already had the honor of being invited to dinner by several of the first people of quality; and I must do them the justice to say, the good taste and magnificence of their tables very well answers to that of their furniture. I have been more than once entertained with fifty dishes of meat, all served in silver, and well dressed; the dessert proportionable, served in the finest china. But the variety and richness of their wines is what appears the most surprising. The constant way is, to lay a list of their names upon the plates of the guests, along with the napkins; and I have counted several times to the number of eighteen different sorts, all exquisite in their kinds.

I was yesterday at Count Schönbrunn the vice-chancellor's garden, where I was invited to dinner, and I must own that I never saw a place so perfectly delightful as the Fauxbourgs of Vienna. It is very large and almost wholly composed of delicious pal-

aces; and if the emperor found it proper to permit the gates of the town to be laid open that the Faux-bourgs might be joined to it, he would have one of the largest and best-built cities of Europe. Count Schönbrunn's villa is one of the most magnificent; the furniture, all rich brocades, so well fancied and fitted up, nothing can look more gay and splendid, — not to speak of a gallery, full of rarities of coral, mother of pearl, etc., and throughout the whole house a profusion of gilding, carving, fine paintings, the most beautiful porcelain, statues of alabaster and ivory, and vast orange and lemon trees in gilt pots. The dinner was perfectly fine and well ordered, and made still more agreeable by the good-humor of the Count.

I have not yet been at court, being forced to stay for my gown, without which there is no waiting on the empress, though I am not without a great impatience to see a beauty that has been the admiration of so many different nations. When I have had that honor, I will not fail to let you know my real thoughts, always taking a particular pleasure in communicating them to my dear sister.

XXVIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF — [MAR].

VIENNA, *Sept.* 14, O. S. 1716.

THOUGH I have so lately troubled you, my dear sister, with a long letter, yet I will keep my promise in giving you an account of my first going to court.

In order to that ceremony, I was squeezed up in a gown, and adorned with a gorget and the other implements thereunto belonging, — a dress very inconvenient, but which certainly shows the neck and shape to great advantage. I cannot forbear in this place giving you some description of the fashions here, which are more monstrous and contrary to all common-sense and reason than 't is possible for you to imagine. They build certain fabrics of gauze on their heads about a yard high, consisting of three or four stories, fortified with numberless yards of heavy ribbon. The foundation of this structure is a thing they call " Bourle " awhich is exactly of the same shape and kind, but about four times as big, as those rolls our prudent milk-maids make use of to fix their pails upon. This machine they cover with their own hair, which they mix with a great deal of false, it being a particular beauty to have their heads too large to go into a moderate tub. Their hair is prodigiously powdered, to conceal the mixture, and set out with three or four rows of bodkins (wonderfully large, that stick [out] two or three inches from their hair), made of diamonds, pearls, red, green, and yellow stones, that it certainly requires as much art and experience to carry the load upright as to dance upon May-day with the garland. Their whalebone petticoats outdo ours by several yards' circumference and cover some acres of ground.

You may easily suppose how much this extraordinary dress sets off and improves the natural ugliness with which God Almighty has been pleased to endow them all generally. Even the lovely empress herself

is obliged to comply in some degree with these absurd fashions, which they would not quit for all the world. I had a private audience (according to ceremony) of half an hour, and then all the other ladies were permitted to come [and] make their court. I was perfectly charmed with the empress. I cannot however tell you that her features are regular; her eyes are not large, but have a lively look, full of sweetness; her complexion the finest I ever saw; her nose and forehead well made; but her mouth has ten thousand charms that touch the soul. When she smiles, 't is with a beauty and sweetness that force adoration. She has a vast quantity of fine fair hair; but then her person, — one must speak of it poetically to do it rigid justice; all that the poets have said of the mien of Juno, the air of Venus, come not up to the truth. The Graces move with her; the famous statue of Medecis was not formed with more delicate proportions. Nothing can be added to the beauty of her neck and hands. Till I saw them, I did not believe there were any in Nature so perfect, and I was almost sorry that my rank here did not permit me to kiss them; but they are kissed sufficiently, for everybody that waits on her pays that homage at their entrance and when they take leave.

When the ladies were come in, she sat down to Quinze. I could not play at a game I had never seen before, and she ordered me a seat at her right hand and had the goodness to talk to me very much with that grace so natural to her. I expected every moment when the men were to come in to pay their court; but this drawing-room is very different from

that of England; no man enters it but the old grand-master, who comes in to advertise the empress of the approach of the emperor. His imperial majesty did me the honor of speaking to me in a very obliging manner; but he never speaks to any of the other ladies, and the whole passes with a gravity and air of ceremony that has something very formal in it.

. . . . . .

I had audience next day of the empress mother, a princess of great virtue and goodness, but who piques herself so much on a violent devotion she is perpetually performing extraordinary acts of penance without having ever done anything to deserve them. She has the same number of maids of honor, whom she suffers to go in colors, but she herself never quits her mourning; and sure nothing can be more dismal than the mourning here, even for a brother. There is not the least bit of linen to be seen; all black crape instead of it, — the neck, ears, and side of the face covered with a plaited piece of the same stuff, and the face that peeps out in the midst of it looks as if it were pilloried. The widows wear, over and above, a crape forehead-cloth; and in this solemn weed go to all the public places of diversion without scruple.

The next day I was to wait on the empress Amelia, who is now at her palace of retirement half a mile from the town. I had there the pleasure of seeing a diversion wholly new to me, but which is the common amusement of this court. The empress herself was seated on a little throne at the end of a fine alley in the garden, and on each side of her were ranged two

parties of her ladies of honor with other young ladies of quality, headed by the two young archduchesses, all dressed in their hair full of jewels, with fine light guns in their hands; and at proper distances were placed three oval pictures, which were the marks to be shot at. . . . Near the empress was a gilded trophy wreathed with flowers and made of little crooks, on which were hung rich Turkish handkerchiefs, tippets, ribbons, laces, etc., for the small prizes. The empress gave the first with her own hand, which was a fine ruby ring set round with diamonds in a gold snuff-box. There was for the second a little Cupid set with brilliants; and besides these, a set of fine china for a tea-table enchased in gold, Japan trunks, fans, and many gallantries of the same nature. All the men of quality at Vienna were spectators; but only the ladies had permission to shoot, and the Archduchess Amelia carried off the first prize. I was very well pleased with having seen this entertainment, and I do not know but it might make as good a figure as the prize-shooting in the Enid, if I could write as well as Virgil. This is the favorite pleasure of the emperor, and there is rarely a week without some feast of this kind, which makes the young ladies skilful enough to defend a fort, and they laughed very much to see me afraid to handle a gun.

My dear sister, you will easily pardon an abrupt conclusion. I believe by this time you are ready to fear I would never conclude at all.

XXIX.

TO THE LADY R. [RICH].[1]

VIENNA, *Sept.* 20, O. S. [1716].

I AM extremely pleased, but not at all surprised, at the long delightful letter you have had the goodness to send me. I know that you can think of an absent friend even in the midst of a court, and that you love to oblige where you can have no view of a return; and I expect from you that you should love me and think of me when you don't see me.

I have compassion for the mortifications that you tell me befall our little friend, and I pity her much more, since I know that they are only owing to the barbarous customs of our country. Upon my word, if she was here, she would have no other fault but being something too young for the fashion, and she has nothing to do but to transplant hither about seven years hence, to be again a young and blooming beauty. I can assure you that wrinkles or a small stoop in the shoulders, nay, gray hair itself, is no objection to the making new conquests. I know you cannot easily figure to yourself a young fellow of five-and-twenty ogling my Lady Suff— [Suffolk] or pressing to lead the Countess of O — d [Oxford] from an opera. But such are the sights I see every day, and I don't perceive any body surprised at them but myself. A woman till five-

[1] Wife of Lord Rich; she was a celebrated beauty, but her charms were now a little on the wane.

and-thirty is only looked upon as a raw girl, and can possibly make no noise in the world till about forty. I don't know what your ladyship may think of this matter, but 't is a considerable comfort to me to know there is upon earth such a paradise for old women, and I am content to be insignificant at present, in the design of returning when I am fit to appear nowhere else. I cannot help lamenting upon this occasion the pitiful case of too many good English ladies, long since retired to prudery and ratifia, whom if their stars had luckily conducted hither would still shine in the first rank of beauties. And then that perplexing word reputation has quite another meaning here than what you give it at London; and getting a lover is so far from losing that 't is properly getting reputation, — ladies being much more respected in regard to the rank of their lovers than that of their husbands.

. . . . . .

And having no intrigue at all is so far a disgrace, that, I 'll assure you, a lady who is very much my friend here told me but yesterday how much I was obliged to her for justifying my conduct in a conversation on my subject, where it was publicly asserted that I could not possibly have common-sense, that I had been about town above a fortnight and had made no steps towards commencing an *amour*. My friend pleaded for me that my stay was uncertain, and she believed that was the cause of my seeming stupidity; and this was all she could find to say in my justification.

But one of the pleasantest adventures I ever

met in my life was last night, and which will give you a just idea after what delicate manner the *belles passions* are managed in this country. I was at the assembly of the Countess of ——, and the young Count of —— led me downstairs, and he asked me how long I intended to stay here. I made answer that my stay depended on the emperor, and it was not in my power to determine it. "Well, madam," said he, "whether your time here is to be long or short, I think you ought to pass it agreeably, and to that end you must engage in a little affair of the heart." "My heart," answered I, gravely enough, "does not engage very easily, and I have no design of parting with it." "I see, madam," said he, sighing, "by the ill nature of that answer, that I am not to hope for it, which is a great mortification to me that am charmed with you. But, however, I am still devoted to your service; and since I am not worthy of entertaining you myself, do me the honor of letting me know whom you like best among us, and I 'll engage to manage the affair entirely to your satisfaction." You may judge in what manner I should have received this compliment in my own country, but I was well enough acquainted with the way of this to know that he really intended me an obligation, and thanked him with a grave courtesy for his zeal to serve me, and only assured him that I had no occasion to make use of it.

Thus you see, my dear, gallantry and good breeding are as different in different climates as morality and religion. Who have the rightest

notions of both, we shall never know till the day of judgment, for which great day of *éclaircissement* I own there is very little impatience in your etc.

XXX.

TO THE LADY X.——[1]

VIENNA, *Oct.* 1, O. S. [1716].

You desire me, madam, to send you some account of the customs here, and at the same time a description of Vienna. I am always willing to obey your commands, but I must upon this occasion desire you to take the will for the deed. If I should undertake to tell you all the particulars in which the manner here differs from ours, I must write a whole quire of the dullest stuff that ever was read or printed without being read. Their dress agrees with the French or English in no one article but wearing petticoats, and they have many fashions peculiar to themselves; as that it is indecent for a widow ever to wear green or rose color, but all the other gayest colors at her own discretion. The assemblies here are the only regular diversion, the operas being always at Court, and commonly on some particular occasion. Madam Rabutin has the assembly constantly every night at her house; and the other ladies, whenever they have a mind to display the magnificence of their apartments, or oblige a friend by complimenting them

[1] So in the MSS.

on the day of their saint, they declare that on such a day the assembly shall be at their house in honor of the feast of the Count or Countess such-a-one. These days are called days of gala, and all the friends or relations of the lady whose saint it is, are obliged to appear in their best clothes and all their jewels. The mistress of the house takes no particular notice of anybody nor returns anybody's visit; and whoever pleases may go, without the formality of being presented. The company are entertained with ice in several forms, winter and summer; afterwards they divide into parties of ombre, piquet, or conversation, all games of hazard being forbid.

I saw t'other day the gala for Count Altheim, the emperor's favorite, and never in my life saw so many fine clothes ill-fancied. They embroider the richest gold stuffs; and provided they can make their clothes expensive enough, that is all the taste they show in them. On other days, the general dress is a scarf and what you please under it.

XXXI.

TO THE COUNTESS —— [MAR].

LEIPZIG, *Nov.* 21, O. S. [1716].

I BELIEVE, dear sister, you will easily forgive my not writing to you from Dresden as I promised, when I tell you that I never went out of my chaise from Prague to that place.

You may imagine how heartily I was tired with twenty-four hours' post-travelling without sleep or refreshment (for I can never sleep in a coach, however fatigued). We passed by moonshine the frightful precipices that divide Bohemia from Saxony, at the bottom of which runs the river Elbe; but I cannot say that I had reason to fear drowning in it, being perfectly convinced that, in case of a tumble, it was utterly impossible to come alive to the bottom. In many places the road is so narrow that I could not discern an inch of space between the wheels and the precipice. Yet I was so good a wife not to wake Mr. W ——, who was fast asleep by my side, to make him share in my fears, since the danger was unavoidable, till I perceived, by the bright light of the moon, our postilions nodding on horseback while the horses were on a full gallop, and I thought it very convenient to call out to desire them to look where they were going. My calling waked Mr. W ——, and he was much more surprised than myself at the situation we were in, and assured me that he had passed the Alps five times in different places without ever having gone a road so dangerous. I have been told since it is common to find the bodies of travellers in the Elbe; but, thank God, that was not our destiny, and we came safe to Dresden, so much tired with fear and fatigue, it was not possible for me to compose myself to write.

After passing these dreadful rocks, Dresden appeared to me a wonderful agreeable situation, in a fine large plain on the banks of the Elbe. I was very glad to stay there a day to rest myself. The town

is the neatest I have seen in Germany; most of the houses are new built; the elector's palace very handsome, and his repository full of curiosities of different kinds, with a collection of medals very much esteemed. Sir ——, our king's envoy, came to see me here, and Madame de L ——, whom I knew in London, when her husband was minister to the King of Poland there. She offered me all things in her power to entertain me and brought some ladies with her, whom she presented to me. The Saxon ladies resemble the Austrian no more than the Chinese those of London; they are very genteelly dressed after the French and English modes, and have generally pretty faces, but the most determined *minaudières* in the whole world. They would think it a mortal sin against good breeding if they either spoke or moved in a natural manner. They all affect a little soft lisp and a pretty pitty-pat step; which female frailties ought, however, to be forgiven them in favor of their civility and good nature to strangers, which I have a great deal of reason to praise.

The Countess of Cozelle is kept prisoner in a melancholy castle some leagues from hence; and I cannot forbear telling you what I have heard of her, because it seems to me very extraordinary, though I foresee I shall swell my letter to the size of a packet. She was mistress to the King of Poland (Elector of Saxony), with so absolute a dominion over him that never any lady had had so much power in that Court. They tell a pleasant story of his majesty's first declaration of love, which he made in a visit to her, bringing in one hand a bag of a hundred thousand crowns

and in the other a horseshoe, which he snapped asunder before her face, leaving her to draw consequences from such remarkable proofs of strength and liberality. I know not which charmed her; but she consented to leave her husband, to give herself up to him entirely, being divorced publicly in such a manner as by their laws permits either party to marry again. God knows whether it was at this time or in some other fond fit, but it is certain the king had the weakness to make her a formal contract of marriage, which, though it could signify nothing during the life of the queen, pleased her so well that she could not be contented without telling all the people she saw and giving herself the airs of a queen. Men endure everything while they are in love; but when the excess of passion was cooled by long possession, his majesty began to reflect on the ill consequences of leaving such a paper in her hands, and desired to have it restored to him. She rather chose to endure all the most violent effects of his anger than give it up; and though she is one of the richest and most avaricious ladies of her country, she has refused the offer of the continuation of a large pension and the security of a vast sum of money she has amassed, and has at last provoked the king to confine her person, where she endures all the terrors of a strait imprisonment and remains still inflexible either to threats or promises, though her violent passions have brought her into fits, which it is supposed will soon put an end to her life. I cannot forbear having some compassion for a woman that suffers for a point of honor, however mistaken, especially in a country

where points of honor are not over-scrupulously observed among ladies.

I could have wished Mr. W.'s business had permitted a longer stay at Dresden.

Perhaps I am partial to a town where they profess the Protestant religion; but everything seemed to me with quite another air of politeness than I have found in other places. Leipzig, where I am at present, is a town very considerable for its trade; and I take this opportunity of buying pages' liveries, gold stuffs for myself, etc., all things of that kind being at least double the price at Vienna, partly because of the excessive customs and partly the want of genius and industry in the people, who make no one sort of thing there; and the ladies are obliged to send even for their shoes out of Saxony. The fair here is one of the most considerable in Germany, and the resort of all the people of quality, as well as the merchants. This is a fortified town; but I avoid ever mentioning fortifications, being sensible that I know not how to speak of them. I am the more easy under my ignorance when I reflect that I am sure you will willingly forgive the omission; for if I made you the most exact description of all the ravelins and bastions I see in my travels, I dare swear you would ask me, What is a ravelin? and What is a bastion?

Adieu, my dear sister.

XXXII.

TO THE LADY R. [RICH.]

HANOVER, *Dec.* 1, O. S. [1716].

I AM very glad, my dear Lady R., that you have been so well pleased, as you tell me, at the report of my returning to England; though, like other pleasures, I can assure you it has no real foundation. I hope you know me enough to take my word against any report concerning myself. 'T is true as to distance of place, I am much nearer to London than I was some weeks ago; but as to the thoughts of a return, I never was farther off in my life. I own I could with great joy indulge the pleasing hopes of seeing you and the very few others that share my esteem; but while Mr. —— [Wortley] is determined to proceed in his design, I am determined to follow him.

I am running on upon my own affairs; that is to say, I am going to write very dully, as most people do when they write of themselves. I will make haste to change the disagreeable subject by telling you that I have now got into the region of beauty. All the women have literally rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eye-brows, and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. These perfections never leave them till the hour of their deaths, and have a very fine effect by candle-light; but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety. They resemble one another as much

as Mrs. Salmon's Court of Great Britain,[1] and are in as much danger of melting away by too near approaching the fire, which they for that reason carefully avoid, though it is now such excessive cold weather that I believe they suffer extremely by that piece of self-denial.

The snow is already very deep, and people begin to slide about in their traineaus. This is a favorite diversion all over Germany. They are little machines fixed upon a sledge, that hold a lady and gentleman, and are drawn by one horse. The gentleman has the honor of driving, and they move with a prodigious swiftness. The lady, the horse, and the traineau are all as fine as they can be made; and when there are many of them together, it is a very agreeable show. At Vienna, where all pieces of magnificence are carried to excess, there are sometimes traineaus that cost five or six hundred pounds English. . . .

Adieu, my dear Lady R.; continue to write to me, and believe none of your goodness is lost upon

Your, etc.

XXXIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF —— [MAR.]

BLANKENBURG, *Dec.* 17, O. S. [1716].

I RECEIVED yours, dear sister, the very day I left Hanover. You may easily imagine I was then in

[1] A waxwork show, as famous then as Madame Taussand's later.

too great a hurry to answer it; but you see I take the first opportunity of doing myself that pleasure.

I came here the 15th, very late at night, after a terrible journey in the worst roads and weather that ever poor traveller suffered. I have taken this little fatigue merely to oblige the reigning empress and carry a message from her imperial majesty to the Duchess of Blankenburg, her mother, who is a princess of great address and good breeding, and may be still called a fine woman. It was so late when I came to this town, I did not think it proper to disturb the duke and duchess with the news of my arrival, and took up my quarters in a miserable inn; but as soon as I had sent my compliments to their highnesses, they immediately sent me their own coach and six horses, which had however enough to do to draw us up the very high hill on which the castle is situated. The duchess is extremely obliging to me, and this little court is not without its diversions. The duke tallies at basset every night; and the duchess tells me that she is so well pleased with my company that it makes her play less than she used to do. I should find it very difficult to steal time to write if she was not now at church, where I cannot wait on her, not understanding the language enough to pay my devotions in it.

You will not forgive me if I do not say something of Hanover; I cannot tell you that the town is either large or magnificent. The opera-house, which was built by the late Elector, is much finer than that at Vienna. I was very sorry that the ill weather did not permit me to see Hernhausen in all its beauty,

but in spite of the snow, I thought the gardens very fine. I was particularly surprised at the vast number of orange trees, much larger than I have ever seen in England, though this climate is certainly colder. But I had more reason to wonder that night at the king's table. There was brought to him from a gentleman of this country two large baskets full of ripe oranges and lemons of different sorts, many of which were quite new to me; and, what I thought worth all the rest, two ripe ananas,[1] which, to my taste, are a fruit perfectly delicious. You know they are naturally the growth of Brazil, and I could not imagine how they could come there but by enchantment. Upon inquiry, I learned that they have brought their stoves to such perfection, they lengthen the summer as long as they please, giving to every plant the degree of heat it would receive from the sun in its native soil. The effect is very near the same. I am surprised we do not practise in England so useful an invention.

This reflection naturally leads me to consider our obstinacy in shaking with cold six months in the year rather than make use of stoves, which are certainly one of the greatest conveniences of life; and so far from spoiling the form of a room, they add very much to the magnificence of it, when they are painted and gilt, as at Vienna, or at Dresden, where they are often in the shape of china jars, statues, or fine cabinets, so naturally represented they are not to be distinguished. If ever I return, in defi-

[1] Bananas probably. Evidently this letter was written before the days of hot-houses.

ance to the fashion, you shall certainly see one in the chamber of,

Dear sister, etc.

I will write often, since you desire it; but I must beg you to be a little more particular in yours. You fancy me at forty miles' distance, and forget that after so long an absence I cannot understand hints.

XXXIV.

TO THE ABBOT ——.[1]

VIENNA, *Jan.* 2, O. S., 1717.

I AM really almost tired with the life of Vienna. I am not, indeed, an enemy to dissipation and hurry, much less to amusement and pleasure; but I cannot endure long even pleasure when it is fettered with formality and assumes the air of system. 'T is true I have had here some very agreeable connections, and what will perhaps surprise you, I have particular pleasure in my Spanish acquaintances, Count Oropesa and General Puebla. These two noblemen are much in the good graces of the Emperor, and yet they seem to be brewing mischief. The Court of Madrid cannot reflect without pain upon the territories that were cut off from the Spanish monarchy by the peace of Utrecht, and it seems to be looking wishfully out for an opportunity of getting them back again. . . .

I made acquaintance yesterday with the famous

[1] The Abbé Conti, it is presumed.

poet Rousseau,[1] who lives here under the peculiar protection of Prince Eugene, by whose liberality he subsists. He passes here for a free-thinker, and what is still worse in my esteem, for a man whose heart does not feel the encomiums he gives to virtue and honor in his poems. I like his odes mightily. They are much superior to the lyric productions of our English poets, few of whom have made any figure in that kind of poetry. I don't find that learned men abound here. There is indeed a prodigious number of alchemists at Vienna; the philosopher's stone is the great object of zeal and science, and those who have more reading and capacity than the vulgar have transported their superstition (shall I call it?) or fanaticism from religion to chemistry; and they believe in a new kind of transubstantiation, which is designed to make the laity as rich as the other kind has made the priesthood. This pestilential passion has already ruined several great houses. There is scarcely a man of opulence or fashion that has not an alchemist in his service; and even the Emperor is supposed to be no enemy to this folly in secret, though he has pretended to discourage it in public.

Prince Eugene was so polite as to show me his library yesterday. We found him attended by Rousseau and his favorite, Count Bonneval, who is a man of wit and is here thought to be a very bold and enterprising spirit. The library, though not very ample, is well chosen; but as the Prince will admit into it no editions but what are beautiful and pleasing to

[1] J. B. Rousseau, not Jean Jacques.

the eye, and there are nevertheless numbers of excellent books that are but indifferently printed, this finnikin and foppish taste makes many disagreeable chasms in this collection. The books are pompously bound in Turkey leather, and two of the most famous bookbinders of Paris were expressly sent for to do this work. Bonneval pleasantly told me that there were several quartos on the art of war that were bound with the skins of spahis and janizaries; and this jest, which was indeed elegant, raised a smile of pleasure on the grave countenance of the famous warrior. The Prince, who is a connoisseur in the fine arts, showed me with particular pleasure the famous collection of portraits that formerly belonged to Fouquet, and which he purchased at an excessive price. He has augmented it with a considerable number of new acquisitions, so that he has now in his possession such a collection in that kind as you will scarcely find in any ten cabinets in Europe. If I told you the number, you would say that I make an indiscreet use of the permission to lie, which is more or less given to travellers by the indulgence of the candid.

Count Tarrocco is just come in, — he is the only person I have excepted this morning in my general order to receive no company. I think I see you smile, but I am not so far gone as to stand in need of absolution; though as the human heart is deceitful and the Count very agreeable, you may think that even though I should not want an absolution, I would nevertheless be glad to have an indulgence. No such thing. However, as I am a heretic and you no confessor, I shall make no declarations on

this head. The design of the Count's visit is a ball; more pleasure! I shall be surfeited.

Adieu, etc.

XXXV.

TO THE ABBOT —— [The Abbé Conti].

ADRIANOPLE, *April* 1, O. S. [1717].

YOU see that I am very exact in keeping the promise you engaged me to make; but I know not whether your curiosity will be satisfied with the accounts I shall give you, though I can assure you that the desire I have to oblige you to the utmost of my power has made me very diligent in my inquiries and observations. It is certain we have but very imperfect relations of the manners and religion of these people. . . . The Turks are too proud to converse familiarly with merchants, etc., who can only pick up some confused informations which are generally false; and they can give no better account of the ways here than a French refugee lodging in a garret in Greek Street could write of the Court of England.

The journey we have made from Belgrade hither by land cannot possibly be passed by any out of a public character. The desert woods of Servia are the common refuge of thieves, who rob, fifty in a company, [so] that we had need of all our guards to secure us, and the villages so poor that only force could extort from them necessary provisions. Indeed the janizaries had no mercy on their poverty, killing all the poultry and sheep they could find without asking whom they belonged to; while the wretched owners

durst not put in their claim, for fear of being beaten. . . . When the pashas travel, it is yet worse. Those oppressors are not content with eating all that is to be eaten belonging to the peasants ; after they have crammed themselves and their numerous retinue, they have [the] impudence to exact what they call "teeth-money," a contribution for the use of their teeth worn with doing them the honor of devouring their meat. This is a literal known truth, however extravagant it seems. . . .

I had the advantage of lodging three weeks at Belgrade with a principal effendi, that is to say, a scholar. This set of men are equally capable of preferments in the law or the Church, those two sciences being cast into one, a lawyer and a priest being the same word. . . . The Grand Signior, though general heir to his people, never presumes to touch their lands or money, which go in an uninterrupted succession to their children. It is true, they lose this privilege by accepting a place at Court or the title of pasha ; but there are few examples of such fools among them. You may easily judge the power of these men, who have engrossed all the learning, and almost all the wealth, of the empire. 'T is they that are the real authors, though the soldiers are the actors, of revolutions. They deposed the late Sultan Mustapha ; and their power is so well known, it is the Emperor's interest to flatter them.

This is a long digression. I was going to tell you that an intimate daily conversation with the effendi Achmet-Beg gave me an opportunity of knowing their religion and morals in a more particular manner than

perhaps any Christian ever did. I explained to him the difference between the religion of England and Rome; and he was pleased to hear there were Christians that did not worship images, or adore the Virgin Mary. The ridicule of transubstantiation appeared very strong to him. Upon comparing our creeds together, I am convinced that if our friend Dr. —— had free liberty of preaching here, it would be very easy to persuade the generality to Christianity, whose notions are already little different from his. Mr. Wh —— [Whiston] would make a very good apostle here. I don't doubt but his zeal will be much fired, if you communicate this account to him; but tell him he must first have the gift of tongues, before he could possibly be of any use.

Mahometism is divided into as many sects as Christianity; and the first institution as much neglected and obscured by interpretations. I cannot here forbear reflecting on the natural inclination of mankind to make mysteries and novelties. . . . But the most prevailing opinion, if you search into the secret of the effendis, is plain deism. But this is kept from the people, who are amused with a thousand different notions, according to the different interests of their preachers. There are very few amongst them (Achmet-Beg denied there were any) so absurd as to set up for wit by declaring they believe no God at all. Sir Paul Rycaut is mistaken (as he commonly is) in calling the sect *muterin* (that is, the secret with us) atheists, they being deists, and their impiety consists in making a jest of their prophet. Achmet-Beg did not own to me that he

was of this opinion, but made no scruple of deviating from some part of Mahomet's law by drinking wine with the same freedom we did. When I asked him how he came to allow himself that liberty, he made answer, all the creatures of God were good, and designed for the use of man; however, that the prohibition of wine was a very wise maxim, and meant for the common people, being the source of all disorders among them; but that the Prophet never designed to confine those that knew how to use it with moderation. However, scandal ought to be avoided, and that he never drank it in public. This is the general way of thinking among them, and very few forbear drinking wine that are able to afford it. He assured me that if I understood Arabic, I should be very well pleased with reading the Alcoran, which is so far from the nonsense we charge it with, it is the purest morality, delivered in the very best language. I have since heard impartial Christians speak of it in the same manner; and I don't doubt but all our translations are from copies got from the Greek priests, who would not fail to falsify it with the extremity of malice. No body of men ever were more ignorant and more corrupt; yet they differ so little from the Romish church, I confess nothing gives me a greater abhorrence of the cruelty of your clergy than the barbarous persecution of them, whenever they have been their masters, for no other reason than not acknowledging the Pope. . . .

But of all the religions I have seen, the Arnaöut seem to me the most particular. They are natives of Arnaöutlich, the ancient Macedonia, and still re-

tain something of the courage and hardiness, though they have lost the name, of Macedonians, being the best militia in the Turkish empire, and the only check upon the janizaries. They are foot-soldiers. We had a guard of them, relieved in every considerable town we passed; they are all clothed and armed at their own expense; generally lusty young fellows, dressed in clean, white coarse cloth, carrying guns of a prodigious length, which they run with on their shoulders as if they did not feel the weight of them, the leader singing a sort of rude tune, not unpleasant, and the rest making up the chorus. These people, living between Christians and Mahometans and not being skilled in controversy, declare that they are utterly unable to judge which religion is best; but, to be certain of not entirely rejecting the truth, they very prudently follow both, and go to the mosques on Fridays and the church on Sundays, saying for their excuse, that at the Day of Judgment they are sure of protection from the true prophet; but which that is, they are not able to determine in this world. I believe there is no other race of mankind have so modest an opinion of their own capacity.

These are the remarks I have made on the diversity of religions I have seen. I don't ask your pardon for the liberty I have taken in speaking of the Roman. I know you equally condemn the quackery of all churches as much as you revere the sacred truths, in which we both agree.

. . . . . .

I have now told you all that is worth telling you, and perhaps more, relating to my journey. When I

am at Constantinople, I 'll try to pick up some curiosities, and then you shall hear again from

Yours, etc.

XXXVI.

TO MRS. S. C—— [MISS SARAH CHISWELL].[1]

ADRIANOPLE, *April* 1, O. S. [1717].

IN my opinion, dear S., I ought rather to quarrel with you for not answering my Nimeguen letter of August till December than to excuse my not writing again till now. I am sure there is on my side a very good excuse for silence, having gone such tiresome land-journeys, though I don't find the conclusion of them so bad as you seem to imagine. I am very easy here, and not in the solitude you fancy me. The great quantity of Greek, French, English, and Italians that are under our protection make their court to me from morning till night, and, I 'll assure you, are many of them very fine ladies ; for there is no possibility for a Christian to live easily under this government but by the protection of an ambassador, and the richer they are, the greater their danger.

Those dreadful stories you have heard of the plague have very little foundation in truth. I own I have much ado to reconcile myself to the sound of a word which has always given me such terrible ideas, though I am convinced there is little more in it than a fever. As a proof of which we passed through two or three towns most violently infected. In the very

[1] She was an early friend of Lady Mary.

next house where we lay (in one of those places) two persons died of it. Luckily for me, I was so well deceived that I knew nothing of the matter; and I was made believe that our second cook who fell ill here had only a great cold. However, we left our doctor to take care of him, and yesterday they both arrived here in good health; and I am now let into the secret that he has had the plague. There are many that escape it; neither is the air ever infected. I am persuaded it would be as easy to root it out here as out of Italy and France; but it does so little mischief, they are not very solicitous about it, and are content to suffer this distemper instead of our variety, which they are utterly unacquainted with.

. . . . . .

À propos of distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that I am sure will make you wish yourself here. The smallpox, so fatal and so general amongst us, is here entirely harmless by the invention of *ingrafting*, which is the term they give it. There is a set of old women who make it their business to perform the operation every autumn, in the month of September, when the great heat is abated. People send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the smallpox; they make parties for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly fifteen or sixteen together), the old woman comes with a nut-shell full of the matter of the best sort of smallpox, and asks what veins you please to have opened. She immediately rips open that you offer to her with a large needle (which gives you no more pain than a common scratch) and puts into

the vein as much venom as can lie upon the head of her needle, and after binds up the little wound with a hollow bit of shell; and in this manner opens four or five veins. The Grecians have commonly the superstition of opening one in the middle of the forehead, in each arm, and on the breast, to mark the sign of the cross; but this has a very ill effect, all these wounds leaving little scars, and is not done by those that are not superstitious, who choose to have them in the legs, or that part of the arm that is concealed. The children or young patients play together all the rest of the day, and are in perfect health to the eighth. Then the fever begins to seize them, and they keep their beds two days, very seldom three. They have very rarely above twenty or thirty in their faces, which never mark; and in eight days' time they are as well as before their illness. Where they are wounded, there remain running sores during the distemper, which I don't doubt is a great relief to it. Every year thousands undergo this operation; and the French ambassador says pleasantly that they take the smallpox here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died in it; and you may believe I am very well satisfied of the safety of the experiment, since I intend to try it on my dear little son.

I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in England; and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their revenue for the good of mankind.

But that distemper is too beneficial to them not to expose to all their resentment the hardy wight that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps, if I live to return, I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion admire the heroism in the heart of your friend, etc.

XXXVII.

TO HER R. H. THE P — [PRINCESS OF WALES][1]

ADRIANOPLE, *April* 1, O. S. [1717].

I HAVE now, madam, past a journey that has not been undertaken by any Christian since the time of the Greek emperors;[2] and I shall not regret all the fatigues I have suffered in it, if it gives me an opportunity of amusing your R. H. by an account of places utterly unknown amongst us, — the Emperor's ambassadors, and those few English that have come hither, always going on the Danube to Nicopolis. But that river was now frozen, and Mr. —— [Wortley] so zealous for the service of his Majesty, he would not defer his journey to wait for the conveniency of that passage.

We crossed the deserts of Servia, almost quite overgrown with wood, though a country naturally fertile, and the inhabitants industrious; but the oppression of the peasants is so great, they are forced to abandon their houses and neglect their tillage, all

[1] Afterwards Queen Caroline, wife of George II.

[2] Not the fact. Sir William Hussey had made the same journey in King William's time.

they have being a prey to the janizaries, whenever they please to seize upon it. We had a guard of five hundred of them, and I was almost in tears every day to see their insolencies in the poor villages through which we passed.

After seven days' travelling through thick woods, we came to Nissa, once the capital of Servia, situate in a fine plain on the river Nissava, in a very good air, and so fruitful a soil, that the great plenty is hardly credible. I was certainly assured that the quantity of wine last vintage was so prodigious they were forced to dig holes in the earth to put it in, not having vessels enough in the town to hold it. The happiness of this plenty is scarce perceived by the oppressed people. I saw here a new occasion for my compassion, — the wretches that had provided twenty wagons for our baggage from Belgrade hither for a certain hire being all sent back without payment, some of their horses lamed, and others killed, without any satisfaction made for them. The poor fellows came round the house weeping and tearing their hair and beards in a most pitiful manner, without getting anything but drubs from the insolent soldiers. I cannot express to your R. H. how much I was moved at this scene. I would have paid them the money out of my own pocket, with all my heart, but it had been only giving so much to the aga, who would have taken it from them without any remorse.

After four days' journey from this place over the mountains, we came to Sophia, situate in a large, beautiful plain on the river Isca, or Iscæ, surrounded with distant mountains. It is hardly possible to see

a more agreeable landscape. The city itself is very large and extremely populous. Here are hot baths, very famous for their medicinal virtues. Four days' journey from hence we arrived at Philipopoli, after having passed the ridges between the mountains of Hæmus and Rhodope, which are always covered with snow. This town is situate on a rising ground near the river Hebrus, and is almost wholly inhabited by Greeks; here are still some ancient Christian churches. They have a bishop, and several of the richest Greeks live here; but they are forced to conceal their wealth with great care, the appearance of poverty (which includes part of its inconveniences) being all their security against feeling it in earnest. The country from hence to Adrianople is the finest in the world. Vines grow wild on all the hills; and the perpetual spring they enjoy makes everything look gay and flourishing. But this climate, as happy as it seems, can never be preferred to England, with all its snows and frosts, while we are blessed with an easy government, under a king who makes his own happiness consist in the liberty of his people, and chooses rather to be looked upon as their father than their master.

This theme would carry me very far, and I am sensible that I have already tired out your R. H.'s patience. But my letter is in your hands, and you may make it as short as you please by throwing it into the fire when you are weary of reading it.

I am, madam,

With the greatest respect, etc.

XXXVIII.

TO THE LADY ——.[1]

ADRIANOPLE, *April* 1, O. S. [1717].

I AM now got into a new world, where everything I see appears to me a change of scene; and I write to your ladyship with some content of mind, hoping at least that you will find the charm of novelty in my letters, and no longer reproach me that I tell you nothing extraordinary.

I won't trouble you with a relation of our tedious journey; but I must not omit what I saw remarkable at Sophia, one of the most beautiful towns in the Turkish empire, and famous for its hot baths, that are resorted to both for diversion and health. I stopped here one day on purpose to see them. Desiring to go *incognita*, I hired a Turkish coach. These *voitures* are not at all like ours, but much more convenient for the country, the heat being so great that glasses would be very troublesome. They are made a good deal in the manner of the Dutch coaches, having wooden lattices painted and gilded; the inside being painted with baskets and nosegays of flowers, intermixed commonly with little poetical mottoes. They are covered all over with scarlet cloth lined with silk, and very often richly embroidered and fringed. This covering entirely hides the persons in them, but may be thrown back at pleasure, and the ladies peep through the lattices. They hold four

[1] Wharncliffe's edition says Lady Rich.

people very conveniently, seated on cushions, but not raised.

In one of these covered wagons I went to the bagnio about ten o'clock. It was already full of women. It is built of stone, in the shape of a dome, with no windows but in the roof, which gives light enough. There were five of these domes joined together, the outmost being less than the rest, and serving only as a hall, where the portress stood at the door. Ladies of quality generally give this woman the value of a crown or ten shillings; and I did not forget that ceremony. The next room is a very large one paved with marble, and all round it, raised, two sofas of marble, one above another. There were four fountains of cold water in this room, falling first into marble basins, and then running on the floor in little channels made for that purpose, which carried the streams into the next room, something less than this, with the same sort of marble sofas, but so hot with steams of sulphur proceeding from the baths joining to it, it was impossible to stay there with one's clothes on. The two other domes were the hot baths, one of which had cocks of cold water turning into it, to temper it to what degree of warmth the bathers have a mind to.

I was in my travelling habit, which is a riding-dress, and certainly appeared very extraordinary to them. Yet there was not one of them that showed the least surprise or impertinent curiosity, but received me with all the obliging civility possible. I know no European court where the ladies would have

behaved themselves in so polite a manner to a stranger. I believe in the whole there were two hundred women, and yet none of those disdainful smiles or satiric whispers that never fail in our assemblies when anybody appears that is not dressed exactly in the fashion. They repeated over and over to me, "Uzelle, pék, uzelle," which is nothing but "charming, very charming." The first sofas were covered with cushions and rich carpets, on which sat the ladies; and on the second their slaves behind them, — but without any distinction of rank by their dress, all being in the state of nature; that is, in plain English, stark naked, without any beauty or defect concealed. Yet there was not the least wanton smile or immodest gesture amongst them. They walked and moved with the same majestic grace which Milton describes of our general mother. There were many amongst them as exactly proportioned as ever any goddess was drawn by the pencil of Guido or Titian; and most of their skins shiningly white, only adorned by their beautiful hair divided into many tresses, hanging on their shoulders, braided either with pearl or ribbon, perfectly representing the figures of the Graces.

I was here convinced of the truth of a reflection I had often made, that if it was the fashion to go naked, the face would be hardly observed. I perceived that the ladies with the finest skins and most delicate shapes had the greatest share of my admiration, though their faces were sometimes less beautiful than those of their companions. To tell you the truth, I had wickedness enough to wish secretly that

Mr. Jervas[1] could have been there invisible. I fancy it would have very much improved his art to see so many fine women naked, in different postures, — some in conversation, some working, others drinking coffee or sherbert, and many negligently lying on their cushions, while their slaves (generally pretty girls of seventeen or eighteen) were employed in braiding their hair in several pretty fancies. In short, it is the women's coffee-house, where all the news of the town is told, scandal invented, etc. They generally take this diversion once a week, and stay there at least four or five hours, without getting cold by immediate coming out of the hot bath into the cold room, which was very surprising to me. The lady that seemed the most considerable among them entreated me to sit by her, and would fain have undressed me for the bath. I excused myself with some difficulty. They being all so earnest in persuading me, I was at last forced to open my dress and show them my stays, which satisfied them very well; for I saw they believed I was so locked up in that machine that it was not in my own power to open it, which contrivance they attributed to my husband. I was charmed with their civility and beauty, and should have been very glad to pass more time with them; but Mr. W—— [Wortley] resolving to pursue his journey the next morning early, I was in haste to see the ruins of Justinian's church, which did not afford me so agreeable a prospect as I had left, being little more than a heap of stones.

Adieu, madam; I am sure I have now entertained

[1] Sir Geoffrey Kneller.

you with an account of such a sight as you never saw in your life, and what no book of travels could inform you of. 'T is no less than death for a man to be found in one of these places.[1]

[1] Dr. Russel, an author of great credit, in his "History of Aleppo," questions the truth of the account here given by Lady Mary Wortley, affirming that the native ladies of that city, with whom, as their physician, he had permission to converse through a lattice, denied to him the prevalence, and almost the existence of the custom she describes, and even seemed as much scandalized at hearing of it as if they had been born and bred in England. The writer of this note confesses to having entertained doubts upon this point, arising from the statement of Dr. Russel; but these doubts were removed by the testimony of a lady who travelled some years ago in Turkey, and was several months an inmate of the English ambassador's house at Pera, whose veracity no one who knew her could doubt, and whose word would have been taken before the oaths of a whole harem. That lady, having been prevented by circumstances from visiting the baths at Constantinople, had an opportunity of doing so at Athens, and there she found Lady Mary's account strictly correct in the main points, although the sight did not inspire her with the same degree of admiration. To use a trite metaphor, she found Lady Mary's outline faithful, but her coloring too vivid. It may therefore be fairly presumed that the Aleppo ladies, perceiving the doctor's opinion of the custom, thought fit to disclaim it, or that it really did not prevail in that particular city, and their knowledge went no further. — W.

XXXIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF B—— [BRISTOL].

ADRIANOPLE, *April* 1, O S. [1717].

As I never can forget the smallest of your ladyship's commands, my first business here has been to enquire after the stuffs you ordered me to look for, without being able to find what you would like. The difference of the dress here and at London is so great, the same sort of things are not proper for *caftáns* and *manteaus*. However, I will not give over my search, but renew it again at Constantinople, though I have reason to believe there is nothing finer than what is to be found here, being the present residence of the court. The Grand Signior's eldest daughter was married some few days before I came; and upon that occasion the Turkish ladies display all their magnificence. The bride was conducted to her husband's house in very great splendor. She is widow of the late Vizier, who was killed at Peterwaradin; though that ought rather to be called a contract than a marriage, not having ever lived with him; however, the greatest part of his wealth is hers. He had the permission of visiting her in the seraglio, and being one of the handsomest men in the empire, had very much engaged her affections. When she saw this second husband, who is at least fifty, she could not forbear bursting into tears. He is a man of merit, and the declared favorite of the Sultan (which they call *mosáyp*), but that is not enough to make him pleasing in the eyes of a girl of thirteen.

The government here is entirely in the hands of the army; and the Grand Signior, with all his absolute power, as much a slave as any of his subjects, and trembles at a janizary's frown. Here is, indeed, a much greater appearance of subjection than among us; a minister of State is not spoken to but upon the knee; should a reflection on his conduct be dropped in a coffee-house (for they have spies everywhere), the house would be razed to the ground, and perhaps the whole company put to the torture. No huzzaing mobs, senseless pamphlets, and tavern disputes about politics, —

> "A consequential ill that freedom draws;
> A bad effect, — but from a noble cause."

None of our harmless calling names! but when a minister here displeases the people, in three hours' time he is dragged even from his master's arms. They cut off his hands, head, and feet, and throw them before the palace gate with all the respect in the world; while that Sultan (to whom they all profess an unlimited adoration) sits trembling in his apartment, and dare neither defend nor revenge a favorite. This is the blessed condition of the most absolute monarch upon earth, who owns no *law* but his *will*.

I cannot help wishing, in the loyalty of my heart, that the parliament would send hither a ship-load of your passive-obedient men, that they might see arbitrary government in its clearest, strongest light, where it is hard to judge whether the prince, people, or ministers are most miserable. I could make many

reflections on this subject; but I know, madam, your own good sense has already furnished you with better than I am capable of.

I went yesterday with the French embassadress [1] to see the Grand Signior in his passage to the mosque.

. . . . . .

The Sultan appeared to us, a handsome man of about forty, with a very graceful air, but something severe in his countenance, his eyes very full and black. He happened to stop under the window where we stood, and (I suppose being told who we were) looked upon us very attentively, [so] that we had full leisure to consider him, and the French embassadress agreed with me as to his good mien. I see that lady very often; she is young, and her conversation would be a great relief to me if I could persuade her to live without those forms and ceremonies that make life formal and tiresome. But she is so delighted with her guards, her four-and-twenty footmen, gentlemen ushers, etc., that she would rather die than make me a visit without them; not to reckon a coachful of attending damsels yclep'd maids of honor. What vexes me is that as long as she will visit with a troublesome equipage, I am obliged to do the same; however, our mutual interest makes us much together.

I went with her the other day all round the town in an open gilt chariot, with our joint train of attendants, preceded by our guards, who might have sum-

[1] Madame de Bonnac, daughter of the Duc de Biron. She was a young woman recently married (1715) to the Marquis de Bonnac.

moned the people to see what they had never seen, nor ever would see again, — two young Christian embassadresses never yet having been in this country at the same time, nor I believe ever will again. Your ladyship may easily imagine that we drew a vast crowd of spectators, but all silent as death. If any of them had taken the liberties of our mob upon any strange sight, our janizaries had made no scruple of falling on them with their scimitars, without danger for so doing, being above law. Yet these people have some good qualities; they are very zealous and faithful where they serve, and look upon it as their business to fight for you upon all occasions. Of this I had a very pleasant instance in a village on this side Philipopolis, where we were met by our domestic guard. I happened to bespeak pigeons for my supper, upon which one of my janizaries went immediately to the cadi (the chief civil officer of the town), and ordered him to send in some dozens. The poor man answered that he had already sent about, but could get none. My janizary, in the height of his zeal for my service, immediately locked him up prisoner in his room, telling him he deserved death for his impudence in offering to excuse his not obeying my command; but out of respect to me, he would not punish him but by my order, and accordingly came very gravely to me to ask what should be done to him, adding by way of compliment that if I pleased he would bring me his head. This may give you some idea of the unlimited power of these fellows, who are all sworn brothers, and bound to revenge the injuries done to one another, whether at

Cairo, Aleppo, or any part of the world; and this inviolable league makes them so powerful, the greatest man at the court never speaks to them but in a flattering tone; and in Asia, any man that is rich is forced to enrol himself a janizary to secure his estate.

But I have already said enough; and I dare swear, dear madam, that by this time 't is a very comfortable reflection to you that there is no possibility of your receiving such a tedious letter but once in six months; 't is that consideration has given me the assurance to entertain you so long, and will, I hope, plead the excuse of, dear madam, etc.

XL.

TO THE COUNTESS OF —— [MAR].

ADRIANOPLE, *April* 18, O. S. [1717].

I WROTE to you, dear sister, and all my other English correspondents, by the last ship, and only Heaven can tell when I shall have another opportunity of sending to you; but I cannot forbear writing, though perhaps my letter may lie upon my hands this two months. To confess the truth, my head is so full of my entertainment yesterday, that 't is absolutely necessary for my own repose to give it some vent. Without farther preface, I will then begin my story.

I was invited to dine with the Grand Vizier's lady,[1]

[1] The Sultana Hafiten, favorite and widow of the Sultan Mustapha, who died in 1703. She is described more fully in Letter xliv.

and it was with a great deal of pleasure I prepared myself for an entertainment which was never given before to any Christian. I thought I should very little satisfy her curiosity (which I did not doubt was a considerable motive to the invitation) by going in a dress she was used to see, and therefore dressed myself in the court habit of Vienna, which is much more magnificent than ours. However, I chose to go *incognita*, to avoid any disputes about ceremony: and went in a Turkish coach, only attended by my woman that held up my train, and the Greek lady who was my interpretress. I was met at the court door by her black eunuch, who helped me out of the coach with great respect, and conducted me through several rooms, where her she-slaves, finely dressed, were ranged on each side. In the innermost I found the lady sitting on her sofa, in a sable vest. She advanced to meet me, and presented me half a dozen of her friends with great civility. She seemed a very good woman, near fifty years old. I was surprised to observe so little magnificence in her house, the furniture being all very moderate, and except the habits and number of her slaves, nothing about her that appeared expensive. She guessed at my thoughts, and told me that she was no longer of an age to spend either her time or money in superfluities; that her whole expense was in charity, and her whole employment praying to God. There was no affectation in this speech; both she and her husband are entirely given up to devotion. He never looks upon any other woman; and what is much more extraordinary, touches no bribes, notwithstanding the

example of all his predecessors. He is so scrupulous in this point, that he would not accept Mr. W——'s [Wortley's] present, till he had been assured over and over that it was a settled perquisite of his place at the entrance of every ambassador.

She entertained me with all kind of civility till dinner came in, which was served, one dish at a time, to a vast number, all finely dressed after their manner, which I do not think so bad as you have perhaps heard it represented. I am a very good judge of their eating, having lived three weeks in the house of an *effendi* at Belgrade, who gave us very magnificent dinners, dressed by his own cooks, which the first week pleased me extremely; but I own I then began to grow weary of it, and desired our own cook might add a dish or two after our manner. But I attribute this to custom. I am very much inclined to believe an Indian that had never tasted of either would prefer their cookery to ours. Their sauces are very high, all the roast very much done. They use a great deal of rich spice. The soup is served for the last dish; and they have at least as great variety of ragouts as we have. I was very sorry I could not eat of as many as the good lady would have had me, who was very earnest in serving me of everything. The treat concluded with coffee and perfumes, which is a high mark of respect; two slaves kneeling *censed* my hair, clothes, and handkerchief. After this ceremony, she commanded her slaves to play and dance, which they did with their guitars in their hands; and she excused to me their want of skill, saying she took no care to accomplish them in that art.

I returned her thanks, and soon after took my leave. I was conducted back in the same manner I entered; and would have gone straight to my own house, but the Greek lady with me earnestly solicited me to visit the *kiyàya's* lady,[1] saying he was the second officer in the empire, and ought indeed to be looked upon as the first, the Grand Vizier having only the name, while he exercised the authority. I had found so little diversion in this *harém* that I had no mind to go into another. But her importunity prevailed with me, and I am extreme glad that I was so complaisant.

All things here were with quite another air than at the Grand Vizier's; and the very house confessed the difference between an old devotee and a young beauty. It was nicely clean and magnificent. I was met at the door by two black eunuchs, who led me through a long gallery between two ranks of beautiful young girls, with their hair finely plaited, almost hanging to their feet, all dressed in fine light damasks, brocaded with silver. I was sorry that decency did not permit me to stop to consider them nearer. But that thought was lost upon my entrance into a large room, or rather pavilion, built round, with gilded sashes, which were most of them thrown up; and the trees planted near them gave an agreeable shade, which hindered the sun from being troublesome. The jessamines and honeysuckles that twisted round their trunks, shedding a soft perfume, increased by a white marble fountain playing sweet water in the

[1] Wife of the deputy to the Grand Vizier.

lower part of the room, which fell into three or four basins with a pleasing sound. The roof was painted with all sort of flowers, falling out of gilded baskets that seemed tumbling down. On a sofa, raised three steps, and covered with fine Persian carpets, sat the *kiyàya's* lady, leaning on cushions of white satin, embroidered; and at her feet sat two young girls, the eldest about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dressed perfectly rich, and almost covered with jewels. But they were hardly seen near the fair Fatima (for that is her name), so much her beauty effaced everything. I have seen all that has been called lovely either in England or Germany, and must own that I never saw anything so gloriously beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have been taken notice of near hers. She stood up to receive me, saluting me after their fashion, putting her hand upon her heart with a sweetness full of majesty that no court breeding could ever give. She ordered cushions to be given to me, and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honor. I confess, though the Greek lady had before given me a great opinion of her beauty, I was so struck with admiration that I could not for some time speak to her, being wholly taken up in gazing. That surprising harmony of features! that charming result of the whole! that exact proportion of body! that lovely bloom of complexion, unsullied by art! the unutterable enchantment of her smile! But her eyes! — large and black, with all the soft languishment of the blue, every turn of her face discovering some new charm!

She was dressed in a *caftán* of gold brocade, flowered with silver, very well fitted to her shape, and showing to advantage the beauty of her bosom, only shaded by the thin gauze of her shift. Her drawers were pale pink, green, and silver; her slippers white, finely embroidered; her lovely arms adorned with bracelets of diamonds, and her broad girdle set round with diamonds; upon her head a rich Turkish handkerchief of pink and silver, her own fine black hair hanging a great length in various tresses; and on one side of her head some bodkins of jewels. I am afraid you will accuse me of extravagance in this description. I think I have read somewhere that women always speak in rapture when they speak of beauty, but I cannot imagine why they should not be allowed to do so. I rather think it virtue to be able to admire without any mixture of desire or envy. The gravest writers have spoken with great warmth of some celebrated pictures and statues. The workmanship of Heaven certainly excels all our weak imitations, and I think has a much better claim to our praise. For me, I am not ashamed to own I took more pleasure in looking on the beauteous Fatima than the finest piece of sculpture could have given me.

She told me the two girls at her feet were her daughters, though she appeared too young to be their mother. Her fair maids were ranged below the sofa, to the number of twenty, and put me in mind of the pictures of the ancient nymphs. I did not think all Nature could have furnished such a scene of beauty. She made them a sign to play and dance.

Four of them immediately began to play some soft airs on instruments between a lute and a guitar, which they accompanied with their voices, while the others danced by turns. This dance was very different from what I had seen before. . . . I suppose you may have read that the Turks have no music but what is shocking to the ears; but this account is from those who never heard any but what is played in the streets, and is just as reasonable as if a foreigner should take his ideas of the English music from the bladder and string, and marrow-bones and cleavers. I can assure you that the music is extremely pathetic; 't is true I am inclined to prefer the Italian, but perhaps I am partial. I am acquainted with a Greek lady who sings better than Mrs. Robinson,[1] and is very well skilled in both, who gives the preference to the Turkish. 'T is certain they have very fine natural voices; these were very agreeable. When the dance was over, four fair slaves came into the room with silver censers in their hands, and perfumed the air with amber, aloes-wood, and other rich scents. After this they served me coffee upon their knees in the finest Japan china, with *soucoupes* of silver, gilt. The lovely Fatima entertained me all this time in the most polite, agreeable manner, calling me often *Guzél sultanum*, or "the beautiful sultana," and desiring my friendship with the best grace in the world, lamenting that she could not entertain me in my own language.

When I took my leave, two maids brought in a fine

[1] A famous opera-singer, afterwards the Countess of Petersborough.

silver basket of embroidered handkerchiefs; she begged I would wear the richest for her sake, and gave the others to my woman and interpretress. I retired through the same ceremonies as before, and could not help fancying I had been some time in Mahomet's paradise, so much I was charmed with what I had seen. I know not how the relation of it appears to you. I wish it may give you part of my pleasure; for I would have my dear sister share in all the diversions of, etc.

XLI.

TO THE ABBOTT —— [ABBÉ CONTI].

CONSTANTINOPLE, *May* 29, O. S. [1717].

I HAVE had the advantage of very fine weather all my journey; and the summer being now in its beauty, I enjoyed the pleasure of fine prospects; and the meadows being full of all sort of garden flowers and sweet herbs, my berlin perfumed the air as it pressed them. The Grand Signior furnished us with thirty covered wagons for our baggage, and five coaches of the country for my women. We found the road full of the great *spahis*, and their equipages coming out of Asia to the war. They always travel with tents; but I chose to lie in houses all the way.

I will not trouble you with the names of the villages we passed, in which there was nothing remarkable; but at Tchiorlú we were lodged in a *conac*, or

little seraglio, built for the use of the Grand Signior when he goes this road. I had the curiosity to view all the apartments destined for the ladies of his court. They were in the midst of a thick grove of trees, made fresh by fountains; but I was surprised to see the walls almost covered with little distiches of Turkish verse, written with pencils. I made my interpreter explain them to me, and I found several of them very well turned, though I easily believed him that they lost much of their beauty in the translation. One was literally thus in English: —

"We come into this world; we lodge, and we depart.
He never goes that 's lodged within my heart."

The rest of our journey was through fine painted meadows, by the side of the Sea of Marmora, the ancient Propontis. We lay the next night at Selivrea, anciently a noble town. It is now a very good seaport, and neatly built enough, and has a bridge of thirty-two arches. Here is a famous ancient Greek church. I had given one of my coaches to a Greek lady, who desired the conveniency of travelling with me; she designed to pay her devotions, and I was glad of the opportunity of going with her. I found it an ill-built place, set out with the same sort of ornaments, but less rich, than the Roman Catholic churches. They showed me a saint's body, where I threw a piece of money, and a picture of the Virgin Mary, drawn by the hand of St. Luke, very little to the credit of his painting; but, however, the finest Madonna of Italy is not more famous for her miracles. The Greeks have a most monstrous taste in

their pictures, which for more finery are always drawn upon a gold ground. You may imagine what a good air this has; but they have no notion either of shade or proportion. They have a bishop here, who officiated in his purple robe, and sent me a candle almost as big as myself for a present, when I was at my lodging.

We lay the next night at a town called Bujuk Checkmedji, or Great Bridge; and the night following, Kujuc Checkmedji, Little Bridge, in a very pleasant lodging, formerly a monastery of dervises, having before it a large court, encompassed with marble cloisters, with a good fountain in the middle. The prospect from this place and the gardens round it are the most agreeable I have seen; and shows that monks of all religions know how to choose their retirements. 'T is now belonging to a *hogia*, or schoolmaster, who teaches boys here; and asking him to show me his own apartment, I was surprised to see him point to a tall cypress-tree in the garden, on the top of which was a room for a bed for himself, and a little lower, one for his wife and two children, who slept there every night. I was so diverted with the fancy, I resolved to examine his nest nearer; but after going up fifty steps, I found I had still fifty to go [up], and then I must climb from branch to branch, with some hazard of my neck. I thought it the best way to come down again.

We arrived the next evening at Constantinople; but I can yet tell you very little of it, all my time having been taken up with receiving visits, which are at least a very good entertainment to the eyes, — the young

women being all beauties, and their beauty highly improved by the good taste of their dress. Our palace is in Pera, which is no more a suburb of Constantinople than Westminster is a suburb to London. All the ambassadors are lodged very near each other. One part of our house shows us the port, the city, and the seraglio, and the distant hills of Asia, — perhaps altogether the most beautiful prospect in the world.

A certain French author says that Constantinople is twice as large as Paris. Mr. W—— [Wortley] is unwilling to own it is bigger than London, though I confess it appears to me to be so ; but I don't believe it is so populous. The burying-fields about it are certainly much larger than the whole city. It is surprising what a vast deal of land is lost this way in Turkey. Sometimes I have seen burying-places of several miles belonging to very inconsiderable villages, which were formerly great towns, and retain no other mark of their ancient grandeur. On no occasion do they ever remove a stone that serves for a monument. Some of them are costly enough, being of very fine marble. They put up a pillar with a carved turban on the top of it to the memory of a man ; and as the turbans, by their different shapes, show the quality or profession, 't is in a manner putting up the arms of a deceased ; besides, the pillar commonly bears a large inscription in gold letters. The ladies have a simple pillar, without other ornament, except those that die unmarried, who have a rose on the top of it. . . . I have got some very valuable of the Macedonian kings, particularly one of

Perseus, so lively, I fancy I can see all his ill qualities in his face. I have a porphyry head, finely cut, of the true Greek sculpture; but who it represents is to be guessed at by the learned when I return. For you are not to suppose these antiquaries (who are all Greeks) know anything. Their trade is only to sell; they have correspondents at Aleppo, Grand Cairo, in Arabia, and Palestine, who send them all they can find, and very often great heaps that are only fit to melt into pans and kettles. They get the best price they can for any of them, without knowing those that are valuable from those that are not. Those that pretend to skill generally find out the image of some saint in the medals of the Greek cities. One of them, showing me the figure of a Pallas, with a victory in her hand on a reverse, assured me it was the Virgin holding a crucifix. The same man offered me the head of a Socrates on a sardonyx; and to enhance the value, gave him the title of Saint Augustin.

I have bespoken a mummy, which I hope will come safe to my hands, notwithstanding the misfortune that befell a very fine one designed for the King of Sweden. He gave a great price for it, and the Turks took it into their heads that he must certainly have some considerable project depending upon it. They fancied it the body of God knows who, and that the fate of their empire mystically depended on the conservation of it. Some old prophecies were remembered upon this occasion, and the mummy committed prisoner to the Seven Towers, where it has remained under close confinement ever since. I

dare not try my interest in so considerable a point as the release of it, but I hope mine will pass without examination.

I can tell you nothing more at present of this famous city. When I have looked a little about me you shall hear from me again.

I am, Sir, etc.

XLII.

TO MR. P—— [POPE].

BELGRADE VILLAGE, *June* 17, O. S. [1717].

I HOPE before this time you have received two or three of my letters. I had yours but yesterday, though dated the third of February, in which you suppose me to be dead and buried. I have already let you know that I am still alive; but to say truth, I look upon my present circumstances to be exactly the same with those of departed spirits.

The heats of Constantinople have driven me to this place, which perfectly answers the description of the Elysian fields. I am in the middle of a wood, consisting chiefly of fruit-trees, watered by a vast number of fountains, famous for the excellency of their water, and divided into many shady walks upon short grass that seems to be artificial, but I am assured, is the pure work of Nature, within view of the Black Sea, from whence we perpetually enjoy the refreshment of cool breezes that make us insensible of the heat of the summer. The village is only inhab-

ited by the richest amongst the Christians, who meet every night at a fountain forty paces from my house to sing and dance; the beauty and dress of the women exactly resembling the ideas of the ancient nymphs, as they are given us by the representations of the poets and painters. But what persuades me more fully of my decease is the situation of my own mind, the profound ignorance I am in of what passes among the living (which only comes to me by chance), and the great calmness with which I receive it. Yet I have still a hankering after my friends and acquaintance left in the world, according to the authority of that admirable author, —

> "That spirits departed are wondrous kind
> To friends and relations left behind;
> Which nobody can deny."

Of which solemn truth I am a *dead* instance. I think Virgil is of the same opinion, that in human souls there will still be some remains of human passions, —

> "Curae non ipsa in morte relinquunt."

And 't is very necessary, to make a perfect Elysium, that there should be a river Lethe, which I am not so happy to find.

To say truth, I am sometimes very weary of this singing and dancing and sunshine, and wish for the smoke and impertinencies in which you toil, though I endeavor to persuade myself that I live in a more agreeable variety than you do, and that Monday, setting of partridges; Tuesday, reading English;

Wednesday, studying the Turkish language (in which, by the way, I am already very learned); Thursday, classical authors; Friday, spent in writing; Saturday, at my needle; and Sunday, admitting of visits and hearing music, — is a better way of disposing the week than Monday at the drawing-room; Tuesday, Lady Mohun's; Wednesday, the opera; Thursday, the play; Friday, Mrs. Chetwynd's, etc., — a perpetual round of hearing the same scandal and seeing the same follies acted over and over, which here affect me no more than they do other dead people. I can now hear of displeasing things with pity and without indignation. The reflection on the great gulf between you and me cools all news that come hither. I can neither be sensibly touched with joy nor grief, when I consider that possibly the cause of either is removed before the letter comes to my hands. But (as I said before) this indolence does not extend to my few friendships; I am still warmly sensible of yours and Mr. Congreve's, and desire to live in your remembrances, though dead to all the world beside.

XLIII.

TO THE LADY RICH.

BELGRADE VILLAGE, *June* 17, O. S. [1717].

I HEARTILY beg your ladyship's pardon; but I really could not forbear laughing heartily at your letter, and the commissions you are pleased to honor me with.

You desire me to buy you a Greek slave, who is to be mistress of a thousand good qualities. The Greeks are subjects, and not slaves. Those who are to be bought in that manner are either such as are taken in war, or stolen by the Tartars from Russia, Circassia, or Georgia, and are such miserable, awkward, poor wretches, you would not think any of them worthy to be your housemaids. 'T is true that many thousands were taken in the Morea; but they have been, most of them, redeemed by the charitable contributions of the Christians, or ransomed by their own relations at Venice. The fine slaves that wait upon the great ladies or serve the pleasures of the great men are all bought at the age of eight or nine years old, and educated with great care to accomplish them in singing, dancing, embroidery, etc. They are commonly Circassians, and their patron never sells them, except it is as a punishment for some very great fault. If ever they grow weary of them they either present them to a friend or give them their freedom. Those that are exposed to sale at the markets are always either guilty of some crime, or so entirely worthless that they are of no use at all. I am afraid you will doubt the truth of this account, which I own is very different from our common notions in England; but it is no less truth for all that.

Your whole letter is full of mistakes from one end to the other. I see you have taken your ideas of Turkey from that worthy author Dumont, who has written with equal ignorance and confidence. 'T is a particular pleasure to me here to read the voyages to the Levant, which are generally so far removed from

truth, and so full of absurdities, I am very well diverted with them. They never fail giving you an account of the women, whom 't is certain they never saw, and talking very wisely of the genius of the men, into whose company they are never admitted; and very often describe mosques, which they dare not peep into. The Turks are very proud, and will not converse with a stranger they are not assured is considerable in his own country. I speak of the men of distinction; for as to the ordinary fellows, you may imagine what ideas their conversation can give of the general genius of the people. . . .

As to the balm of Mecca, I will certainly send you some; but it is not so easily got as you suppose it, and I cannot, in conscience, advise you to make use of it. I know not how it comes to have such universal applause. All the ladies of my acquaintance at London and Vienna have begged me to send pots of it to them. I have had a present of a small quantity (which, I 'll assure you, is very valuable) of the best sort, and with great joy applied it to my face, expecting some wonderful effect to my advantage. The next morning the change indeed was wonderful; my face was swelled to a very extraordinary size, and all over as red as my Lady B.'s. It remained in this lamentable state three days, during which you may be sure I passed my time very ill. I believed it would never be otherways; and to add to my mortification, Mr. W—— [Wortley] reproached my indiscretion without ceasing. However, my face is since *in statu quo;* nay, I am told by the ladies here that it is much mended by the operation, which I confess I

cannot perceive in my looking-glass. Indeed, if one were to form an opinion of this balm from their faces, one should think very well of it. They all make use of it, and have the loveliest bloom in the world. For my part, I never intend to endure the pain of it again; let my complexion take its natural course, and decay in its own due time. I have very little esteem for medicines of this nature; but do as you please, madam; only remember before you use it that your face will not be such as you will care to show in the drawing-room for some days after.

If one was to believe the women in this country, there is a surer way of making one's self beloved than by becoming handsome, though you know that 's our method. But they pretend to the knowledge of secrets that, by way of enchantment, give them the entire empire over whom they please. For me, who am not very apt to believe in wonders, I cannot find faith for this. I disputed the point last night with a lady who really talks very sensibly on any other subject; but she was downright angry with me that she did not perceive she had persuaded me of the truth of forty stories she told me of this kind, and at last mentioned several ridiculous marriages that there could be no other reasons assigned for. I assured her that in England, where we were entirely ignorant of all magic, where the climate is not half so warm, nor the women half so handsome, we were not without our ridiculous marriages; and that we did not look upon it as anything supernatural when a man played the fool for the sake of a woman. But my arguments could not convince her against (as she

said) her certain knowledge. . . . You may imagine how I laughed at this discourse; but all the women here are of the same opinion. They don't pretend to any commerce with the Devil, but that there are certain compositions to inspire love. If one could send over a ship-load of them, I fancy it would be a very quick way of raising an estate. What would not some ladies of our acquaintance give for such merchandise?

Adieu, my dear Lady ——, I cannot conclude my letter with a subject that affords more delightful scenes to [the] imagination. I leave you to figure to yourself the extreme court that will be made to me at my return, if my travels should furnish me with such a useful piece of learning.

I am, dear madam, etc.

XLIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF —— [MAR.]

PERA OF CONSTANTINOPLE, *March* 10, O. S. [1718].

I HAVE not written to you, dear sister, these many months, — a great piece of self-denial. But I know not where to direct, or what part of the world you were in.

In the first place, I wish you joy of your niece; for I was brought to bed of a daughter[1] five weeks ago. I don't mention this as one of my diverting adventures; though I must own that it is not half so mortifying here as in England, there being as much

[1] Lady Bute.

difference as there is between a little cold in the head, which sometimes happens here, and the consumptive coughs so common in London. . . . I returned my visits at three weeks' end; and about four days ago crossed the sea which divides this place from Constantinople to make a new one, where I had the good fortune to pick up many curiosities.

I went to see the Sultana Haftén,[1] favorite of the late Emperor Mustapha, who, you know (or perhaps you don't know), was deposed by his brother, the reigning Sultan Achmet, and died a few weeks after, being poisoned, as it was generally believed. This lady was immediately after his death saluted with an absolute order to leave the seraglio, and choose herself a husband from the great men at the Porte. I suppose you may imagine her overjoyed at this proposal. Quite contrary: these women, who are called and esteem themselves queens, look upon this liberty as the greatest disgrace and affront that can happen to them. She threw herself at the Sultan's feet, and begged him to poignard her, rather than use his brother's widow with that contempt. She represented to him, in agonies of sorrow, that she was privileged from this misfortune, by having brought five princes into the Ottoman family; but all the boys being dead, and only one girl surviving, this

[1] The same lady described in Letter XLII. when Lady Mary "was surprised to find so little magnificence in her house, the furniture being very moderate; and except in the habits and number of her slaves, nothing about her that appeared expensive." I am at a loss to account for the increase in splendor — unless Lady Mary's fancy was kind!

excuse was not received, and she [was] compelled to make her choice. She chose Bekir Effendi, then secretary of State, and above fourscore years old, to convince the world that she firmly intended to keep the vow she had made, of never suffering a second husband, and since she must honor some subject so far as to be called his wife, she would choose him as a mark of her gratitude, since it was he that had presented her at the age of ten years old to her last lord. But she has never permitted him to pay her one visit; though it is now fifteen years she has been in his house, where she passes her time in uninterrupted mourning, with a constancy very little known in Christendom, especially in a widow of twenty-one, for she is now but thirty-six. She has no black eunuchs for her guard, her husband being obliged to respect her as a queen, and not inquire at all into what is done in her apartment, where I was led into a large room, with a sofa the whole length of it, adorned with white marble pillars like a *ruelle*, covered with pale blue figured velvet on a silver ground, with cushions of the same, where I was desired to repose till the Sultana appeared, who had contrived this manner of reception to avoid rising up at my entrance, though she made me an inclination of her head when I rose up to her. I was very glad to observe a lady that had been distinguished by the favor of an emperor, to whom beauties were every day presented from all parts of the world. But she did not seem to me to have ever been half so beautiful as the fair Fatima I saw at Adrianople; though she had the remains of a fine face, more decayed by

sorrow than time. But her dress was something so surprisingly rich, I cannot forbear describing it to you. She wore a vest called *donalma*, and which differs from a *caftán* by longer sleeves, and folding over at the bottom. It was of purple cloth, straight to her shape, and thick set — on each side, down to her feet, and round the sleeves — with pearls of the best water, of the same size as their buttons commonly are. You must not suppose I mean as large as those of my Lord ——, but about the bigness of a pea; and to these buttons large loops of diamonds, in the form of those gold loops so common upon birthday coats. This habit was tied at the waist with two large tassels of smaller pearl, and round the arms embroidered with large diamonds; her shift fastened at the bottom with a great diamond shaped like a lozenge; her girdle, as broad as the broadest English ribbon, entirely covered with diamonds. Round her neck she wore three chains, which reached to her knees, — one of large pearl, at the bottom of which hung a fine-colored emerald, as big as a turkey-egg; another, consisting of two hundred emeralds, close joined together, of the most lively green, perfectly matched, every one as large as a half-crown piece and as thick as three crown pieces; and another of small emeralds, perfectly round. But her earrings eclipsed all the rest. They were two diamonds, shaped exactly like pears, as large as a big hazel-nut. Round her *talpoche* she had four strings of pearl, the whitest and most perfect in the world, at least enough to make four necklaces, every one as large as the duchess of Marl-

borough's, and of the same size, fastened with two roses, consisting of a large ruby for the middle stone, and round them twenty drops of clean diamonds to each. Beside this her head-dress was covered with bodkins of emeralds and diamonds. She wore large diamond bracelets, and had five rings on her fingers, all single diamonds, the largest (except Mr. Pitt's) I ever saw in my life. It is for jewellers to compute the value of these things; but according to the common estimation of jewels in our part of the world, her whole dress must be worth above a hundred thousand pounds sterling. This I am very sure of, — that no European queen has half the quantity; and the empress's jewels, though very fine, would look very mean near hers.

She gave me a dinner of fifty dishes of meat, which (after their fashion) were placed on the table but one at a time, and was extremely tedious. But the magnificence of her table answered very well to that of her dress. The knives were of gold, the hafts set with diamonds. But the piece of luxury that grieved my eyes was the tablecloth and napkins, which were all tiffany, embroidered with silks and gold in the finest manner, in natural flowers. It was with the utmost regret that I made use of these costly napkins, as finely wrought as the finest handkerchiefs that ever came out of this country. You may be sure that they were entirely spoiled before dinner was over. The sherbet (which is the liquor they drink at meals) was served in china bowls; but the covers and salvers massy gold. After dinner, water was brought in a gold basin, and towels of the

same kind of the napkins, which I very unwillingly wiped my hands upon; and coffee was served in china, with gold *soucoupes*.

The Sultana seemed in very good humor, and talked to me with the utmost civility.

. . . . . .

She never mentioned the Sultan without tears in her eyes, yet she seemed very fond of the discourse. "My past happiness," said she, "appears a dream to me. Yet I cannot forget that I was beloved by the greatest and most lovely of mankind. I was chosen from all the rest to make all his campaigns with him; I would not survive him if I was not passionately fond of the princess my daughter. Yet all my tenderness for her was hardly enough to make me preserve my life. When I lost him I passed a whole twelvemonth without seeing the light. Time has softened my despair; yet I now pass some days every week in tears devoted to the memory of my Sultan."

There was no affectation in these words. It was easy to see she was in a deep melancholy, though her good-humor made her willing to divert me.

Now, do I fancy that you imagine I have entertained you all this while with a relation that has at least received many embellishments from my hand? This is but too like (say you) the Arabian Tales, — these embroidered napkins! and a jewel as large as a turkey's egg! You forget, dear sister, those very tales were written by an author of this country, and (excepting the enchantments) are a real representation of the manners here. We travellers are in very hard circumstances. If we say nothing but what has

been said before us, we are dull, and we have observed nothing. If we tell anything new, we are laughed at as fabulous and romantic, not allowing for the difference of ranks, which afford difference of company, more curiosity, or the change of customs, that happen every twenty years in every country. But people judge of travellers exactly with the same candor, good-nature, and impartiality they judge of their neighbors upon all occasions. For my part, if I live to return amongst you, I am so well acquainted with the morals of all my dear friends and acquaintance that I am resolved to tell them nothing at all, to avoid the imputation (which their charity would certainly incline them to) of my telling too much. But I depend upon your knowing me enough to believe whatever I seriously assert for truth, though I give you leave to be surprised at an account so new to you.

But what would you say if I told you that I had been in a *harém* where the winter apartment was wainscotted with inlaid work of mother-of-pearl, ivory of different colors, and olive wood, exactly like the little boxes you have seen brought out of this country; and those rooms designed for summer, the walls all crusted with Japan china, the roofs gilt, and the floors spread with the finest Persian carpets? Yet there is nothing more true. Such is the palace of my lovely friend, the fair Fatima, whom I was acquainted with at Adrianople. I went to visit her yesterday; and if possible she appeared to me handsomer than before. She met me at the door of her chamber, and giving me her hand with the best grace in the world, "You Christian ladies," said she, with

a smile that made her as handsome as an angel, "have the reputation of inconstancy, and I did not expect, whatever goodness you expressed for me at Adrianople, that I should ever see you again. But I am now convinced that I have really the happiness of pleasing you; and if you knew how I speak of you amongst our ladies, you would be assured that you do me justice if you think me your friend." She placed me in the corner of the sofa, and I spent the afternoon in her conversation with the greatest pleasure in the world.

The Sultana Hafitén is what one would naturally expect to find a Turkish lady, — willing to oblige, but not knowing how to go about it; and it is easy to see in her manner that she has lived secluded from the world. But Fatima has all the politeness and good-breeding of a court, with an air that inspires at once respect and tenderness; and, now I understand her language, I find her wit as engaging as her beauty. She is very curious after the manners of other countries, and has not that partiality for her own so common to little minds. A Greek that I carried with me, who had never seen her before (nor could have been admitted now, if she had not been in my train), showed that surprise at her beauty and manner which is unavoidable at the first sight, and said to me in Italian, "This is no Turkish lady; she is certainly some Christian." Fatima guessed she spoke of her, and asked what she said. I would not have told, thinking she would have been no better pleased with the compliment than one of our court beauties to be told she had the air of a Turk; but

the Greek lady told it her, and she smiled, saying, "It is not the first time I have heard so. My mother was a Poloneze taken at the siege of Caminiec; and my father used to rally me, saying he believed his Christian wife had found some Christian gallant, for I had not the air of a Turkish girl." I assured her that if all the Turkish ladies were like her, it was absolutely necessary to confine them from public view for the repose of mankind; and proceeded to tell her what a noise such a face as hers would make in London or Paris. "I can't believe you," replied she, agreeably; "if beauty was so much valued in your country as you say, they would never have suffered you to leave it." Perhaps, dear sister, you laugh at my vanity in repeating this compliment; but I only do it as I think it very well turned, and give it you as an instance of the spirit of her conversation.

Her house was magnificently furnished, and very well fancied, — her winter rooms being furnished with figured velvet on gold grounds, and those for summer with fine Indian quilting embroidered with gold. The houses of the great Turkish ladies are kept clean with as much nicety as those in Holland. This was situated in a high part of the town; and from the windows of her summer apartment we had the prospect of the sea, the islands, and the Asian mountains.

My letter is insensibly grown so long I am ashamed of it. This is a very bad symptom. 'T is well if I don't degenerate into a downright story-teller. It may be our proverb that knowledge is no burden may be true as to one's self, but knowing too much is very apt to make us troublesome to other people.

XLV.

TO THE LADY RICH.

PERA, CONSTANTINOPLE, *March* 16, O. S. [1718].

I AM extremely pleased, my dear lady, that you have at length found a commission for me that I can answer without disappointing your expectations; though I must tell you that it is not so easy as perhaps you think it; and that, if my curiosity had not been more diligent than any other stranger's has ever yet been, I must have answered you with an excuse, as I was forced to do when you desired me to buy you a Greek slave. I have got for you, as you desire, a Turkish love-letter, which I have put in a little box, and ordered the captain of the Smyrniote to deliver it to you with this letter.[1]

. . . . . .

You see this letter is all verses, and I can assure you there is as much fancy shown in the choice of them as in the most studied expressions of our letters, — there being, I believe, a million of verses designed for this use. There is no color, no flower, no weed, no fruit, herb, pebble, or feather that has not a verse belonging to it; and you may quarrel, reproach, or send letters of passion, friendship or civility, or even of news, without ever inking your fingers.

I fancy you are now wondering at my profound

[1] It was a purse containing a pearl and other objects used by the Turks, with a translation of the letter.

learning; but, alas! dear madam, I am almost fallen into the misfortune so common to the ambitious; while they are employed on distant, insignificant conquests abroad, a rebellion starts up at home, — I am in great danger of losing my English. I find it is not half so easy to me to write in it as it was a twelvemonth ago. I am forced to study for expressions, and must leave off all other languages and try to learn my mother tongue. Human understanding is as much limited as human power or human strength. The memory can retain but a certain number of images; and 't is as impossible for one human creature to be perfect master of ten different languages as to have in perfect subjection ten different kingdoms, or to fight against ten men at a time. I am afraid I shall at last know none as I should do. I live in a place that very well represents the tower of Babel, — in Pera they speak Turkish, Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Russian, Sclavonian, Wallachian, German, Dutch, French, English, Italian, Hungarian; and what is worse, there are ten of these languages spoken in my own family. My grooms are Arabs; my footmen, French, English and Germans; my nurse, an Armenian; my housemaids, Russians; half a dozen other servants, Greeks; my steward, an Italian; my janizaries, Turks; [so] that I live in the perpetual hearing of this medley of sounds, which produces a very extraordinary effect upon the people that are born here; they learn all these languages at the same time, and without knowing any of them well enough to write or read in it. There are very few men, women, or even children

here that have not the same compass of words in five or six of them. I know myself several infants of three or four years old that speak Italian, French, Greek, Turkish, and Russian, which last they learn of their nurses, who are generally of that country. This seems almost incredible to you, and is in my mind one of the most curious things in this country, and takes off very much from the merit of our ladies who set up for such extraordinary geniuses, upon the credit of some superficial knowledge of French and Italian.

As I prefer English to all the rest, I am extremely mortified at the daily decay of it in my head, where I 'll assure you (with grief of heart) it is reduced to such a small number of words, I cannot recollect any tolerable phrase to conclude my letter, and am forced to tell your ladyship very bluntly that I am your faithful humble servant.

XLVI.

TO MR. P——.[1]

LYONS, *Sept.* 28, O. S. [1718].

I RECEIVED yours here, and should thank you for the pleasure you express for my return ; but I can hardly forbear being angry at you for rejoicing at what displeases me so much. You will think this but an odd compliment on my side. I 'll assure you 't is not from insensibility of the joy of seeing my friends ; but when I consider that I must at the same

[1] Pope, according to Wharncliffe.

time see and hear a thousand disagreeable impertinents, that I must receive and pay visits, make courtesies, and assist at tea-tables where I shall be half killed with questions; on the other part, that I am a creature that cannot serve anybody but with insignificant good wishes, and that my presence is not a necessary good to any one member of my native country, I think I might much better have stayed where ease and quiet made up the happiness of my indolent life. I should certainly be melancholy if I pursued this theme one line further. I will rather fill the remainder of this paper with the inscriptions on the tables of brass that are placed on each side the town-house here.

I was also showed, without the gate of St. Justinus, some remains of a Roman aqueduct; and behind the monastery of St. Mary's there are the ruins of the imperial palace where the Emperor Claudius was born and where Severus lived. The great cathedral of St. John is a good Gothic building, and its clock much admired by the Germans. In one of the most conspicuous parts of the town is the late king's statue set up, trampling upon mankind. I cannot forbear saying one word here of the French statues (for I never intend to mention any more of them), with their gilded full-bottomed wigs. If their king had intended to express in one image ignorance, ill taste, and vanity, his sculptors could have made no other figure to represent the odd mixture of an old beau who had a mind to be a hero, with a bushel of curled hair on his head and a gilt truncheon in his hand. The French have been so voluminous on the

history of this town, I need say nothing of it. The houses are tolerably well built, and the Belle Cour well planted, from whence is seen the celebrated joining of the Saône and Rhone.

> "Ubi Rhodanus ingens amne prærapido fluit
> Ararque dubitans quo suos fluctus agat."

I have had time to see everything with great leisure, having been confined several days to this town by a swelling in my throat, the remains of a fever occasioned by a cold I got in the damps of the Alps. The doctors here (who are charmed with a new customer) threaten me with all sorts of distempers if I dare to leave them till this swelling is quite vanished; but I, that know the obstinacy of it, think it just as possible to continue my way to Paris with it as to go about the streets of Lyons; and am determined to pursue my journey to-morrow, in spite of doctors, apothecaries, and sore throats.

When you see Lady R. [Rich], tell her I have received her letter, and will answer it from Paris, believing that the place she would most willingly hear of.

XLVII.

TO THE LADY R—— [RICH].

PARIS, *Oct.* 10, O. S. [1718].

I CANNOT give my dear Lady R. [Rich] a better proof of the pleasure I have in writing to her than choosing to do it in this seat of various amusements,

where I am *accablée* with visits, and those so full of vivacity and compliment that 't is full employment enough to hearken, whether one answers or not. The French embassadress at Constantinople has a very considerable and numerous family here, who all come to see me, and are never weary of making enquiries. The air of Paris has already had a good effect on me, for I was never in better health, though I have been extremely ill all the road from Lyons to this place. You may judge how agreeable the journey has been to me, which did not need that addition to make me dislike it. I think nothing so terrible as objects of misery, except one had the godlike attribute of being capable to redress them; and all the country villages of France show nothing else. While the post-horses are changed, the whole town comes out to beg, with such miserable, starved faces, and thin, tattered clothes, they need no other eloquence to persuade [one of] the wretchedness of their condition. This is all the French magnificence till you come to Fontainebleau. There you begin to think the kingdom rich when you are showed one thousand five hundred rooms in the King's hunting-palace. The apartments of the royal family are very large and richly gilt, but I saw nothing in the architecture or painting worth remembering. The long gallery, built by Henry IV., has prospects of all the King's houses; its walls are designed after the taste of those times, but appear now very mean. The park is indeed finely wooded and watered, the trees well grown and planted, and in the fish-ponds are kept tame carp, said to be, some of them, eighty years of age. The

late King passed some months every year at this seat; and all the rocks round it, by the pious sentences inscribed on them, show the devotion in fashion at his court, which I believe died with him; at least, I see no exterior marks of it at Paris, where all people's thoughts seem to be on present diversion.

The fair of St. Lawrence is now in season. You may be sure I have been carried thither, and think it much better disposed than ours of Bartholomew. The shops being all set in rows so regularly, well lighted, they made up a very agreeable spectacle. But I was not at all satisfied with the *grossièreté* of their harlequin, no more than with their music at the opera, which was abominably grating, after being used to that of Italy. Their house is a booth compared to that of the Haymarket, and the playhouse not so neat as that in Lincoln's Inn Fields; but then it must be owned, to their praise, their tragedians are much beyond any of ours. I should hardly allow Mrs. O. [Oldfield] a better place than to be confidante to La ——. I have seen the tragedy of Bajazet so well represented, I think our best actors can be only said to speak, but these to feel; and 't is certainly infinitely more moving to see a man appear unhappy than to hear him say that he is so, with a jolly face and a stupid smirk in his countenance. *À propos* of countenances, I must tell you something of the French ladies. I have seen all the beauties, and such ——(I can't help making use of the coarse word) nauseous [creatures]! so fantastically absurd in their dress! so monstrously unnatural in their paint! their hair cut short, and curled round their faces, loaded

with powder, that makes it look like white wool! and on their cheeks to their chins, unmercifully laid on, a shining red japan, that glistens in a most flaming manner, that they seem to have no resemblance to human faces, and I am apt to believe, took the first hint of their dress from a fair sheep newly ruddled. 'T is with pleasure I recollect my dear, pretty country-women; and if I was writing to anybody else, I should say that these grotesque daubers give me a still higher esteem of the natural charms of dear Lady R.'s auburn hair, and the lively colors of her unsullied complexion.

P. S. — I have met the Abbé [Conti] here, who desires me to make his compliments to you.

XLVIII.

TO MR. P. [POPE [1]].

DOVER, *Nov.* 1 [1718].

I HAVE this minute received a letter of yours, sent me from Paris. I believe and hope I shall very soon see both you and Mr. Congreve; but as I am here in an inn, where we stay to regulate our march to London,

[1] The letter to which this is an answer appears in Lord Wharncliffe's edition of Lady Mary's Letters and Works, and is attributed to Pope. But it does not appear in Pope's letters. Thomson says that the story of the lovers was probably "written by Pope or Gay, or both, for the amusement of their friends, and sent to Lord Burlington, Martha Blount, Mr. Fortescue, and perhaps to others." Pope himself attributed the letter to Gay. The letter is in his usual strain

bag and baggage, I shall employ some of my leisure time in answering that part of yours that seems to require an answer.

I must applaud your good-nature in supposing that your pastoral lovers (vulgarly called haymakers) would

of artificial (and we would say) impudent admiration of Lady Mary.

The verses that Lady Mary parodies are as follows: —

I.

When Eastern lovers feed the fun'ral fire,
On the same pile their faithful fair expire;
Here pitying Heav'n that virtue mutual found,
And blasted both, that it might neither wound.
Hearts so sincere th' Almighty saw well pleas'd,
Sent his own lightning, and the victims seiz'd.
Think not by rig'rous judgment seiz'd,
A pair so faithful could expire;
Victims so pure Heav'n saw well pleas'd,
And snatch'd them in celestial fire.

II.

Live well, and fear no sudden fate;
When God calls virtue to the grave,
Alike 't is justice, soon or late, —
Mercy alike to kill or save.
Virtue unmov'd can hear the call,
And face the flash that melts the ball.

Whereupon the ingenious Mr. Pope thus comments: "Upon the whole, I can't think these people unhappy. The greatest happiness next to living as they would have done, was to die as they did. The greatest honor people of this low degree could have was to be remembered on a little monument, unless you would give them another, — that of being honored with a tear from the finest eyes in the world. I know you have tenderness; you must have it; it is the very emanation of good sense and virtue; the finest minds, like the finest metals, dissolve the easiest."

have lived in everlasting joy and harmony, if the lightning had not interrupted their scheme of happiness. I see no reason to imagine that John Hughes and Sarah Drew were either wiser or more virtuous than their neighbors. That a well-set man of twenty-five should have a fancy to marry a brown woman of eighteen is nothing marvellous; and I cannot help thinking that had they married, their lives would have passed in the common track with their fellow-parishioners. His endeavoring to shield her from the storm was a natural action, and what he would have certainly done for his horse, if he had been in the same situation. Neither am I of opinion that their sudden death was a reward of their mutual virtue. You know the Jews were reproved for thinking a village destroyed by fire more wicked than those that had escaped the thunder. Time and chance happen to all men. Since you desire me to try my skill in an epitaph, I think the following lines perhaps more just, though not so poetical, as yours: —

Here lie John Hughes and Sarah Drew;
Perhaps you 'll say, what 's that to you?
Believe me, friend, much may be said
On this poor couple that are dead.
On Sunday next they should have married;
But see how oddly things are carried!
On Thursday last it rain'd and lighten'd;
These tender lovers, sadly frighten'd,
Shelter'd beneath the cocking hay,
In hopes to pass the storm away;
But the bold thunder found them out
(Commission'd for that end, no doubt),
And, seizing on their trembling breath,

Consign'd them to the shades of death.
Who knows if 't was not kindly done?
For had they seen the next year's sun,
A beaten wife and cuckold swain
Had jointly curs'd the marriage chain;
Now they are happy in their doom,
For P. has wrote upon their tomb.

I confess these sentiments are not altogether so heroic as yours; but I hope you will forgive them in favor of the two last lines. You see how much I esteem the honor you have done them; though I am not very impatient to have the same, and had rather continue to be your stupid, living, humble servant than be celebrated by all the pens in Europe.

I would write to Mr. C. [Congreve], but suppose you will read this to him, if he inquires after me.

XLIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[1721.]

From the tranquil and easy situation in which you left me, dear sister, I am reduced to that of the highest degree of vexation, which I need not set out to you better than by the plain matter of fact, which I heartily wish I had told you long since; and nothing hindered me but a certain *mauvaise honte* which you are reasonable enough to forgive, as very natural, though not very excusable where there is nothing to

be ashamed of; since I can only accuse myself of too much good-nature, or at worst too much credulity, though I believe there never was more pains taken to deceive anybody. In short, a person whose name is not necessary, because you know it, took all sort of methods during almost two year to persuade me that there never was so extraordinary an attachment (or what you please to call it) as they had for me. This ended in coming over to make me a visit against my will, and, as was pretended, very much against their interest. I cannot deny I was very silly in giving the least credit to this stuff. But if people are so silly, you 'll own 't is natura for anybody that is good-natured to pity and be glad to serve a person they believe unhappy upon their account. It came into my head, out of a high point of generosity (for which I wish myself hanged), to do this creature all the good I possibly could, since 't was impossible to make them happy their own way. I advised him very strenuously to sell out of the subscription,[1] and in compliance to my advice he did so; and in less than two days saw he had done very prudently. After a piece of service of this nature, I thought I could more decently press his departure, which his follies made me think necessary for me. He took leave of me with so many tears and grimaces (which I can't imagine how he could counterfeit) as really moved my compassion; and I had much ado to keep to my first resolution of exacting his absence, which he swore would be his

[1] To the South Sea Stock. This is the first letter about Rémond.

death. I told him that there was no other way in the world I would not be glad to serve him in, but that his extravagances made it utterly impossible for me to keep him company. He said that he would put into my hands the money I had won for him, and desired me to improve it, saying that if he had enough to buy a small estate and retire from the world, 't was all the happiness he hoped for in it. I represented to him that if he had so little money as he said, 't was ridiculous to hazard it all. He replied that 't was too little to be of any value, and he would either have it double or quit. After many objections on my side and replies on his, I was so weak to be overcome by his entreaties, and flattered myself also that I was doing a very heroic action in trying to make a man's fortune though I did not care for his addresses. He left me with these imaginations, and my first care was to employ his money to the best advantage. I laid it all out in stock, the general discourse and private intelligence then scattered about being of a great rise. You may remember it was two or three days before the fourth subscription, and you were with me when I paid away the money to Mr. Binfield. I thought I had managed prodigious well in selling out the said stock the day after the shutting the books (for a small profit), to Cox and Cleeve, goldsmiths of very good reputation. When the opening of the books came, my men went off, leaving the stock upon my hands, which was already sunk from near nine hundred pounds to four hundred pounds. I immediately writ him word of this misfortune, with the sincere

sorrow natural to have upon such an occasion, and asked his opinion as to the selling the stock remaining in. He made me no answer to this part of my letter, but a long, eloquent oration of miseries of another nature. I attributed this silence to his disinterested neglect of his money; but, however, resolved to make no more steps in his business without direct orders, after having been so unlucky. This occasioned many letters to no purpose; but the very post after you left London, I received a letter from him in which he told me that he had discovered all my tricks; that he was convinced I had all his money remaining untouched, and he would have it again, or he would print all my letters to him, which, though God knows very innocent in the main, yet may admit of ill constructions, besides the monstrousness of being exposed in such a manner. I hear from other people that he is liar enough to publish that I have borrowed the money of him; though I have a note under his hand, by which he desires me to employ it in the funds, and acquits me of being answerable for the losses that may happen. At the same time, I have attestations and witnesses of the bargains I made, so that nothing can be clearer than my integrity in this business; but that does not hinder me from being in the utmost terror for the consequences (as you may easily guess) of his villany, the very story of which appears so monstrous to me, I can hardly believe myself while I write it; though I omit (not to tire you) a thousand aggravating circumstances. I cannot forgive myself the folly of ever regarding one word he said; and I

see now that his lies have made me wrong several of my acquaintances, and you among the rest, for having said (as he told me) horrid things against me to him. 'T is long since that your behavior has acquitted you in my opinion; but I thought I ought not to mention, to hurt him with you, what was perhaps more misunderstanding or mistake than a designed lie. But he has very amply explained his character to me. What is very pleasant is that but two posts before, I received a letter from him full of higher flights than ever. I beg your pardon (dear sister) for this tedious account; but you see how necessary 'tis for me to get my letters from this madman. Perhaps the best way is by fair means; at least they ought to be first tried. I would have you, then, my dear sister, try to make the wretch sensible of the truth of what I advance, without asking for the letters, which I have already asked for. Perhaps you may make him ashamed of his infamous proceedings by talking of me without taking notice that you know of his threats, only of my dealings. I take this method to be the most likely to work upon him. I beg you would send me a full and true account of this detestable affair (enclosed to Mrs. Murray). If I had not been the most unlucky creature in the world, his letter would have come while you were here, that I might have showed you both his note and the other people's. I knew he was discontented, but was far from imagining a possibility of this thing. I give you a great deal of trouble, but you see I shall owe you the highest obligation if you can serve me; the very endeavoring

of it is a tie upon me to serve you the rest of my life without reserve and with eternal gratitude.[1]

L.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

I CANNOT enough thank you, dear sister, for the trouble you give yourself in my affairs, though I am still so unhappy to find your care very ineffectual. I have actually in my present possession a formal letter directed to Mr. W. [Wortley] to acquaint him with the whole business. You may imagine the inevitable, eternal misfortunes it would have thrown me into had it been delivered by the person to whom it was intrusted. I wish you would make him sensible of the infamy of this proceeding, which can

[1] Horace Walpole, who heartily disliked Lady Mary, has a caustic comment on these letters: "Ten of the letters indeed are dismal lamentations and frights, on a scene of villany of Lady Mary's, who having persuaded one Ruremonde, a Frenchman and her lover, to entrust her with a large sum of money to buy stock for him, frightened him out of England by persuading him that Mr. Wortley had discovered the intrigue, and would murder him, and then would have sunk the trust." But Rémond's letters found among Mr. Wortley Montagu's papers always picture him as sighing in vain. Thomas's theory is that Lady Mary gave these letters to her husband to justify herself. He supposes that in some way the affair had come to Mr. Wortley's ears. St. Simon describes Rémond as "a little stunted man with large nose, big, round, staring eyes, coarse features, and a hoarse voice." But he was very witty.

no way in the world turn to his advantage. Did I refuse giving the strictest account, or had I not the clearest demonstration in my hands of the truth and sincerity with which I acted, there might be some temptation to this baseness; but all he can expect by informing Mr. W. [Wortley] is to hear him repeat the same things I assert; he will not retrieve one farthing, and I am forever miserable. I beg no more of him than to direct any person, man or woman, either lawyer, broker, or a person of quality, to examine me; and as soon as he has sent a proper authority to discharge me on inquiry, I am ready to be examined. I think no offer can be fairer from any person whatsoever; his conduct towards me is so infamous that I am informed I might prosecute him by law if he was here, — he demanding the whole sum as a debt from Mr. Wortley, at the same time I have a note under his hand signed to prove the contrary. I beg with the utmost earnestness that you would make him sensible of his error. I believe 't is very necessary to say something to fright him. I am persuaded, if he was talked to in a style of that kind, he would not dare to attempt to ruin me. I have a great inclination to write seriously to your lord about it, since I desire to determine this affair in the fairest and the clearest manner. I am not at all afraid of making anybody acquainted with it; and if I did not fear making Mr. Wortley uneasy (who is the only person from whom I would conceal it), all the transactions should have been long since enrolled in Chancery. I have already taken care to have the broker's depositions taken before a lawyer

of reputation and merit. I deny giving him no satisfaction; and after that offer, I think there is no man of honor that would refuse signifying to him that as 't is all he can desire, so if he persists in doing me an injury, he may repent it. You know how far 't is proper to take this method. I say nothing of the uneasiness I am under, 't is far beyond any expression; my obligation would be proportional to anybody that would deliver me from it, and I should not think it paid by all the services of my life.

LI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[June, 1721.]

I HAVE just received your letter of May 30, and am surprised, since you own the receipt of my letter, that you give me not the least hint concerning the business that I writ so earnestly to you about. Till that is over, I am as little capable of hearing or repeating news as I should be if my house was on fire. I am sure a great deal must be in your power; the hurting of me can be in no way his interest. I am ready to assign or deliver the money for five hundred pounds stock, to whoever he will name, if he will send my letters into Lady Stafford's hands; which, were he sincere in his offer of burning them, he would readily do. Instead of that, he has writ a letter to Mr. W. [Wortley] to inform him of the whole affair; luckily for me, the person he has sent

it to assures me it shall never be delivered; but I am not the less obliged to his good intentions. For God's sake, do something to set my mind at ease from this business, and then I will not fail to write you regular accounts of all your acquaintance. Mr. Strickland has had a prodigy of good fortune befallen him, which I suppose you have heard of.

My little commission is hardly worth speaking of; if you have not already laid out that small sum in St. Cloud ware, I had rather have it in plain lute-string of any color.

Lady Stafford desires you would buy one suit of minunet for head and ruffles at Boileau's.

LII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

I AM now at Twicknam. 'T is impossible to tell you, dear sister, what agonies I suffer every post-day; my health really suffers so much from my fears that I have reason to apprehend the worst consequences. If that monster acted on the least principles of reason I should have nothing to fear, since 't is certain that after he has exposed me he will get nothing by it. Mr. Wortley can do nothing for his satisfaction I am not willing to do myself. I desire not the least indulgence of any kind. Let him put his affair into the hands of any lawyer whatever. I am willing to submit to any examination; 't is impossible to make a fairer offer than this is. Whoever he employs may

come to me hither on several pretences. I desire nothing from him but that he would send no letters nor messages to my house at London, where Mr. Wortley now is. I am come hither in hopes of benefit from the air, but I carry my distemper about me in an anguish of mind that visibly decays my body every day. I am too melancholy to talk of any other subject. Let me beg you, dear sister, to take some care of this affair, and think you have it in your power to do more than save the life of a sister that loves you.

LIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

DEAR SISTER, — Having this occasion, I would not omit writing, though I have received no answer to my two last. The bearer is well acquainted with my affair, though not from me, till he mentioned it to me first, having heard it from those to whom R. [Rémond] had told it with all the false colors he pleased to lay on. I showed him the formal commission I had to employ the money, and all the broker's testimonies taken before Delpeeke, with his certificate. Your remonstrances have hitherto had so little effect that R. [Rémond] will neither send a letter of attorney to examine my accounts, or let me be in peace. I received a letter from him but two posts since, in which he renews his threats except I send him the whole sum, which is as much in my power as it is to send a million. I can easily comprehend that he may

be ashamed to send a procuration, which must convince the world of all the lies he has told. For my part, I am so willing to be rid of the plague of hearing from him, I desire no better than to restore him with all expedition the money I have in my hands; but I will not do it without a general acquittance in due form, not to have fresh demands every time he wants money. If he thinks that he has a larger sum to receive than I offer, why does he not name a procurator to examine me? If he is content with that sum, I only insist on the acquittance for my own safety. I am ready to send it him, with full license to tell as many lies as he pleases afterwards. I am weary with troubling you with repetitions which cannot be more disagreeable to you than they are to me. I have had, and still have, so much vexation with this execrable affair, 't is impossible to describe it. I had rather talk to you of anything else, but it fills my whole head.

I am still at Twicknam, where I pass my time in great indolence and sweetness. Mr. W. [Wortley] is at this present in Yorkshire. My fair companion puts me oft in mind of our Thoresby conversations; we read and walk together, and I am more happy in her than anything else could make me except your conversation.

LIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*August*, 1721.]

DEAR SISTER, — I give you ten thousand thanks for the trouble you have given yourself. I hope you will continue to take some care of my affairs, because I do not hear they are finished, and cannot yet get rid of my fears. You have not told me that you have received what I sent you by Lady Lansdowne, as also three guineas that she took for you; one of which I beg you would lay out in the same narrow minunet that you sent Mrs. Murray, and send it me by the first opportunity, for the use of my daughter, who is very much your humble servant, and grows a little woman. I live in a sort of solitude, that wants very little of being such as I would have it. Lady J. [Jane] Wharton is to be married to Mr. Holt, which I am sorry for, — to see a young woman that I really think one of the agreeablest girls upon earth so vilely misplaced; but where are people matched? I suppose we shall all come right in Heaven; as in a country-dance, the hands are strangely given and taken while they are in motion, at last all meet their partners when the jig is done.

. . . . . .

LV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

I CANNOT forbear, dear sister, accusing you of unkindness that you take so little care of a business of the last consequence to me. R. [Rémond] writ to me some time ago, to say if I would immediately send him two thousand pounds sterling he would send me an acquittance. As this was sending him several hundreds out of my own pocket, I absolutely refused it; and, in return, I have just received a threatening letter to print I know not what stuff against me. I am too well acquainted with the world (of which poor Mrs. Murray's affair[1] is a fatal instance) not to know that the most groundless accusation is always of ill consequence to a woman, besides the cruel misfortunes it may bring upon me

[1] Mrs. Murray was so unfortunate as to have a footman of her father's pretend a violent passion for her, of which she was quite unconscious until he entered her room at night with a drawn pistol. Her screams brought assistance. The man was arrested, tried, and transported. The affair, although she was quite innocent, occasioned Mrs. Murray infinite mortification, and was the cause of endless gossip. Lady Mary wrote some verses on the subject, called "Epistle from Arthur Grey, the Footman." It was in the inflated, sentimental strain then fashionable, and paid exaggerated compliments to the "lovely nymph" addressed; but Mrs. Murray, who desired nothing of her friends in the matter except oblivion, did not take the Epistle in good part. She was further incensed by an atrocious ballad that she attributed to Lady Mary, in spite of the latter's persistent denial. From this time she appears as Lady Mary's mortal enemy.

in my own family. If you have any compassion either for me or my innocent children, I am sure you will try to prevent it. The thing is too serious to be delayed. I think (to say nothing either of blood or affection) that humanity and Christianity are interested in my preservation. I am sure I can answer for my hearty gratitude and everlasting acknowledgment of a service much more important than that of saving my life.

LVI.

TO THE HONORABLE MISS CALTHORPE.[1]

LONDON, *Dec.* 7, [1723].

MY knight-errantry is at an end, and I believe I shall henceforth think freeing of galley-slaves and knocking down windmills more laudable undertakings than the defence of any woman's reputation whatever. To say truth, I have never had any great esteem for the generality of the fair sex, and my only consolation for being of that gender has been the assurance it gave me of never being married to any one among them. But I own at present I am so much out of humor with the actions of Lady Holdernesse that I never was so heartily ashamed of my petticoats before. You know, I suppose, that by this discreet match she renounces the care of her children, and I am laughed at by all my acquaintance for my faith in her honor and understanding. My

[1] One of the daughters of Henry, Viscount Longueville, whose son was created Earl of Sussex.

only refuge is the sincere hope that she is out of her senses, and taking herself for Queen of Sheba, and Mr. Mildmay for King Solomon. I do not think it quite so ridiculous. But the men, you may well imagine, are not so charitable; and they agree in the kind reflection that nothing hinders women from playing the fool but not having it in their power. The many instances that are to be found to support this opinion ought to make the few reasonable men valued, — but where are the reasonable ladies? Dear madam, come to town, that I may have the honor of saying there is one in St. James's-place.

LVII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[1723.]

Dear Sister, — I have writ to you twice since I received yours in answer to that I sent by Mr. De Caylus, but I believe none of what I send by the post ever come to your hands, nor ever will while they are directed to Mr. Waters, for reasons that you may easily guess. I wish you would give me a safer direction; it is very seldom I can have the opportunity of a private messenger, and it is very often that I have a mind to write to my dear sister. If you have not heard of the Duchess of Montagu's intended journey, you will be surprised at your manner of receiving this, since I send it by one of her servants. She does not design to see anybody nor

anything at Paris, and talks of going from Montpellier to Italy. I have a tender esteem for her, and am heartily concerned to lose her conversation, yet I cannot condemn her resolution. I am yet in this wicked town, but purpose to leave it as soon as the Parliament rises. Mrs. Murray and all her satellites have so seldom fallen in my way, I can say little about them. Your old friend Mrs. Lowther is still fair and young, and in pale pink every night in the Parks; but after being highly in favor, poor I am in utter disgrace, without my being able to guess wherefore, except she fancied me the author or abettor of two vile ballads written on her dying adventure, which I am so innocent of that I never saw [them]. *À propos* of ballads, a most delightful one is said or sung in most houses about our dear, beloved plot,[1] which has been laid firstly to Pope and secondly to me, when God knows we have neither of us wit enough to make it. Lady Rich is happy in dear Sir Robert's absence and the polite Mr. Holt's return to his allegiance, who, though in a treaty of marriage with one of the prettiest girls in town (Lady J. [Jane] Wharton), appears better with her than ever. Lady B. [Betty] Manners is on the brink of matrimony with a Yorkshire Mr. Monckton of three thousand pounds per annum. It is a match of the young duchess's making, and she thinks matter of great triumph over the two coquette beauties, who can get nobody to have and to hold; they are de-

[1] The Atterbury Plot. The ballad Thomas thinks was "Upon the Horrid Plot discovered by Harlequin, the Bishop of Rochester's French Dog." It was attributed to Swift.

cayed to a piteous degree, and so neglected that they are grown constant and particular to the two ugliest fellows in London. . . . This is, I think, the whole state of love; as to that of wit, it splits itself into ten thousand branches; poets increase and multiply to that stupendous degree, you see them at every turn, even in embroidered coats and pink-colored top-knots. Making verses is almost as common as taking snuff, and God can tell what miserable stuff people carry about in their pockets, and offer to all their acquaintances, and you know one cannot refuse reading and taking a pinch. This is a very great grievance, and so particularly shocking to me that I think our wise lawgivers should take it into consideration, and appoint a fast-day to beseech Heaven to put a stop to this epidemical disease, as they did last year for the plague with great success.

Dear sister, adieu. I have been very free in this letter, because I think I am sure of its going safe. I wish my nightgown may do the same; I only choose that as most convenient to you, but if it was equally so, I had rather the money was laid out in plain lutestring, if you could send me eight yards at a time of different colors, designing it for linings; but if this scheme is impracticable, send me a nightgown *à la mode.*

LVIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

Sept. [1725.]

I HAVE already writ you so many letters, dear sister, that if I thought you had silently received them all, I don't know whether I should trouble you with any more; but I flatter myself that they have most of them miscarried; I had rather have my labors lost than accuse you of unkindness. I send this by Lady Lansdowne, who I hope will have no curiosity to open my letter, since she will find in it that I never saw anything so miserably altered in my life; I really did not know her.

> So must the fairest face appear,
> When youth and years are flown;
> So sinks the pride of the parterre,
> When something over-blown.

My daughter makes such a noise in the room, 't is impossible to go on in this heroic style. I hope yours is in great bloom of beauty. I fancy to myself we shall have the pleasure of seeing them co-toasts of the next age. I don't at all doubt but they will outshine all the little Auroras of this, for there never was such a parcel of ugly girls as reign at present. In recompense they are very kind, and the men very merciful, and content, in this dearth of charms, with the poorest stuff in the world. This you'd believe, had I but time to tell you the tender loves of Lady Romney and Lord Carmichael; they are so fond, it does one's heart good to see them. There are some

other pieces of scandal not unentertaining, particularly the Earl of Stair and Lady M. [Mary] Howard, who being your acquaintance, I thought would be some comfort to you. The town improves daily; all people seem to make the best of the talent God has given 'em.

The race of Roxbourghs, Thanets, and Suffolks,[1] are utterly extinct; and everything appears with that edifying plain dealing that I may say, in the words of the Psalmist, "There is no sin in Israel."

I have already thanked you for my nightgown, but 't is so pretty it will bear being twice thanked for.

LIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*April*, 1726.]

I RECEIVED yours, dear sister, this minute, and am very sorry both for your past illness and affliction; though, *au bout du compte*, I don't know why filial piety should exceed fatherly fondness. So much by way of consolation. As to the management at that time, I do verily believe, if my good aunt and sister had been less fools and my dear mother-in-law less mercenary, things might have had a turn more to your advantage and mine too; when we meet, I will tell you many circumstances which would be tedious in a letter. I could not get my sister Gower to join to act with me, and mamma and I were in an actual scold when

[1] All great ladies who had a reputation for stiff propriety.

my poor father expired; she has shown a hardness of heart upon this occasion that would appear incredible to anybody not capable of it themselves. The addition to her jointure is, one way or other, two thousand pounds per annum; so her good Grace remains a passable rich widow, and is already presented by the town with a variety of young husbands.

. . . . . .

Mrs. Murray is in open wars with me in such a manner as makes her very ridiculous without doing me much harm, my moderation having a very bright pretence of showing itself. Firstly, she was pleased to attack me in very Billingsgate at a masquerade, where she was as visible as ever she was in her own clothes. I had the temper not only to keep silence myself, but enjoined it to the person with me, who would have been very glad to have shown his great skill in sousing upon that occasion. She endeavored to sweeten him by very exorbitant praises of his person, which might even have been mistaken for making love from a woman of less celebrated virtue; and concluded her oration with pious warnings to him to avoid the conversation of one so unworthy his regard as myself, who, to her certain knowledge, loved another man. This last article, I own, piqued me more than all her preceding civilities. The gentleman she addressed herself to had a very slight acquaintance with me, and might possibly go away in the opinion that she had been confidante in some very notorious affair of mine. However, I made her no answer at the time; but you may imagine I laid up these things in my heart; and the first assembly I had the honor

to meet her at, with a meek tone of voice, asked her how I had deserved so much abuse at her hands, which I assured her I would never return. She denied it in the spirit of lying; and in the spirit of folly owned it at length. I contented myself with telling her she was very ill advised, and thus we parted. But two days ago, when Sir G. K.'s [1] pictures were to be sold, she went to my sister Gower, and very civilly asked if she intended to bid for your picture, assuring her that, if she did, she would not offer at purchasing it. You know crimp and quadrille incapacitate that poor soul from ever buying anything; but she told me this circumstance; and I expected the same civility from Mrs. Murray, having no way provoked her to the contrary. But she not only came to the auction, but with all possible spite bid up the picture, though I told her that, if you pleased to have it, I would gladly part with it to you, though to no other person. This had no effect upon her, nor her malice any more on me than the loss of ten guineas extraordinary, which I paid upon her account. The picture is in my possession, and at your service if you please to have it. She went to the masquerade a few nights afterwards, and had the good sense to tell people there that she was very unhappy in not meeting me, being come there on purpose to abuse me. What profit or pleasure she has in these ways I cannot find out. This I know, that revenge has so few joys for me, I shall never lose so much time as to undertake it.

[1] Sir Godfrey Kneller. On his death his widow sold all his pictures at auction.

LX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*July*, 1726.]

Dear Sister, — I am very glad to hear you mention meeting in London. We are much mistaken here as to our ideas of Paris; to hear gallantry has deserted it sounds as extraordinary to me as a want of ice in Greenland. We have nothing but ugly faces in this country, but more lovers than ever. There are but three pretty men in England, and they are all in love with me at this present writing. This will amaze you extremely; but if you were to see the reigning girls at present, I will assure you there is very little difference between them and old women. I have been *embourbée* in family affairs for this last fortnight. Lady F. [Frances] Pierrepont, having four hundred pounds per annum for her maintenance, has awakened the consciences of half her relations to take care of her education; and (excepting myself) they have all been squabbling about her, and squabble to this day. My sister Gower carries her off to-morrow morning to Staffordshire. The lies, twattles, and contrivances about this affair are innumerable. I should pity the poor girl if I saw she pitied herself. The Duke of Kingston is in France, but is not to go to your capital; so much for that branch of your family. My blessed offspring has already made a great noise in the world. That young rake, my son, took to his heels t' other day and transported his person to Oxford, being in his own opinion thoroughly qualified

for the University. After a good deal of search we found and reduced him, much against his will, to the humble condition of a schoolboy. It happens very luckily that the sobriety and discretion is of my daughter's side; I am sorry the ugliness is so too, for my son grows extremely handsome.

I don't hear much of Mrs. Murray's despair on the death of poor Gibby, and I saw her dance at a ball where I was two days before his death. I have a vast many pleasantries to tell you, and some that will make your hair stand on an end with wonder. Adieu, dear sister; "conservez-moi l'honneur de votre amitié, et croyez que je suis toute à vous."

LXI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[1726.]

All that I had to say to you was that my F. [father] really expressed a great deal of kindness to me at last, and even a desire of talking to me, which my Lady Duchess would not permit; nor my aunt and sister show anything but a servile complaisance to her. This is the abstract of what you desire to know, and is now quite useless. 'T is over, and better to be forgot than remembered. The Duke of Kingston[1] has hitherto had so ill an education, 't is hard to make any judgment of him; he has spirit, but I fear will never have his father's good sense. As young noblemen go, 't is possible he may make a good fig-

[1] Lady Mary's nephew.

ure amongst them. Wars and rumors of wars make all the conversation at present. The tumbling of the stocks, one way or other, influences most people's affairs. For my own part, I have no concern there or anywhere but hearty prayers that what relates to myself may ever be exactly what it is now. Mutability of sublunary things is the only melancholy reflection I have to make on my own account. I am in perfect health, and hear it said I look better than ever I did in my life, which is one of those lies one is always glad to hear. However, in this dear minute, in this golden now, I am tenderly touched at your misfortune, and can never call myself quite happy till you are so.

My daughter makes her compliments to yours, but has not yet received the letter Lord Erskine said he had for her. Adieu, dear sister.

LXII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*June*, 1727.]

I HAD writ you a long letter, dear sister, and only wanted sealing it, when I was interrupted by a summons to my sister Gower's, whom I never left since. She lasted from Friday to Tuesday, and died about eight o'clock, in such a manner as has made an impression on me not easily shaken off. We are now but two in the world, and it ought to endear us to one another. I am sure whatever I can serve my

poor nieces and nephews in shall not be wanting on my part. I won't trouble you with melancholy circumstances; you may easily imagine the affliction of Lord Gower and Lady Cheyne. I hope you will not let melancholy hurt your own health, which is truly dear to your affectionate sister.

LXIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*July*, 1727.]

You see, dear sister, that I answer your letters as soon as I receive them, and if mine can give you any consolation or amusement, you need never want 'em. I desire you would not continue grieving yourself. Of all sorrows, those we pay to the dead are most vain; and, as I have no good opinion of sorrow in general, I think no sort of it worth cherishing.

. . . . . .

You 'll wonder perhaps to hear Lord Gower is a topping courtier, and that there is not one Tory left in England. There is something extremely risible in these affairs, but not so proper to be communicated by letter; and so I will, in an humble way, return to my domestics. I hear your daughter is a very fine young lady, and I wish you joy of it, as one of the greatest blessings of life. My girl gives me a great prospect of satisfaction, but my young rogue of a son is the most ungovernable little rake that ever played truant. If I were inclined to lay worldly matters to

heart, I could write a quire of complaints about it. You see no one is quite happy, though 'tis pretty much in my nature to console upon all occasions. I advise you to do the same, as the only remedy against the vexations of life; which in my conscience I think affords disagreeable things to the highest ranks, and comforts to the very lowest; so that upon the whole things are more equally disposed among the sons of Adam than they are generally thought to be. You see my philosophy is not so *lugubre* as yours. I am so far from avoiding company that I seek it on all occasions; and when I am no longer an actor upon this stage (by the way, I talk of twenty years hence at the soonest), as a spectator I shall laugh at the farcical actions which may then be represented, nature being exceedingly bountiful in all ages in providing coxcombs, who are the greatest preservatives against the spleen that I ever could find out. I say all these things for your edification, and shall conclude my consolatory epistle with one rule that I have found very conducing to health of body and mind. As soon as you wake in the morning, lift up your eyes and consider seriously what will best divert you that day. Your imagination, being then refreshed by sleep, will certainly put in your mind some party of pleasure, which, if you execute with prudence, will disperse those melancholy vapors which are the foundation of all distempers.

I am your affectionate sister.

LXIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*About August*, 1727.]

My cousin is going to Paris, and I will not let her go without a letter for you, my dear sister, though I never was in a worse humor for writing. I am vexed to the blood by my young rogue of a son, who has contrived at his age to make himself the talk of the whole nation. He is gone knight-erranting, God knows where; and hitherto 't is impossible to find him. You may judge of my uneasiness by what your own would be if dear Lady Fanny was lost. Nothing that ever happened to me has troubled me so much; I can hardly speak or write of it with tolerable temper, and I own it has changed mine to that degree I have a mind to cross the water, to try what effect a new heaven and a new earth will have upon my spirit. If I take this resolution, you shall hear in a few posts. There can be no situation in life in which the conversation of my dear sister will not administer some comfort to me.

LXV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF MAR.

[*October*, 1727.]

I CANNOT deny, but that I was very well diverted on the Coronation day. I saw the procession much

at my ease, in a house which I filled with my own company, and then got into Westminster Hall without trouble, where it was very entertaining to observe the variety of airs that all meant the same thing. The business of every walker there was to conceal vanity and gain admiration. For these purposes some languished and others strutted; but a visible satisfaction was diffused over every countenance as soon as the coronet was clapped on the head. But she that drew the greatest number of eyes was indisputably Lady Orkney. She exposed behind, a mixture of fat and wrinkles; and before, a very considerable protuberance which preceded her. Add to this the inimitable roll of her eyes, and her gray hairs, which by good fortune stood directly upright, and 't is impossible to imagine a more delightful spectacle. She had embellished all this with considerable magnificence, which made her look as big again as usual; and I should have thought her one of the largest things of God's making if my Lady St. John had not displayed all her charms in honor of the day. The poor Duchess of Montrose crept along with a dozen of black snakes playing round her face; and my Lady Portland (who is fallen away since her dismission from court) represented very finely an Egyptian mummy embroidered over with hieroglyphics. In general, I could not perceive but that the old were as well pleased as the young; and I, who dread growing wise more than anything in the world, was overjoyed to find that one can never outlive one's vanity. I have never received the long letter you talk of, and am afraid that you only fancied

that you wrote it. Adieu, dear sister; I am affectionately yours.[1]

LXVI.

TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.

[*October*, 1730?]

Sir, — Since I saw you I have made some inquiries, and heard more of the story you was so kind to mention to me. I am told Pope has had the surprising impudence to assert he can bring the lampoon when he pleases to produce it, under my own hand; I desire he may be made to keep to this offer. If he is so skilful in counterfeiting hands, I suppose he will not confine that great talent to the gratifying his malice, but take some occasion to increase his fortune by the same method, and I may hope (by such practices) to see him exalted according to his merit, which nobody will rejoice at more than myself. I beg of you, sir (as an act of justice), to endeavor to set the truth in an open light, and then I leave to your judgment the character of those who have attempted to hurt mine in so barbarous a manner. I can assure you (in particular) you named a lady to me (as abused in this libel) whose name I never heard before; and as I never had any acquaintance with Dr. Swift, am an utter stranger to all his affairs and even his person, which I never saw to my knowledge, and am now convinced the whole

[1] This was the last letter written to Lady Mar, who shortly afterward was declared insane.

is a contrivance of Pope's to blast the reputation of one who never injured him. I am not more sensible of his injustice than I am, sir, of your candor, generosity, and good sense I have found in you, which has obliged me to be with a very uncommon warmth your real friend, and I heartily wish for an opportunity of showing I am so more effectually than by subscribing myself your very

Humble servant.

LXVII.

TO DR ARBUTHNOT.[1]

Oct. 17 [1730?]

SIR, — I have this minute received your letter, and cannot remember I ever was so much surprised in my life, the whole contents of it being a matter of astonishment. I give you sincere and hearty thanks for your intelligence, and the obliging manner of it. I have ever valued you as a gentleman both of sense and merit, and will join with you in any method you can contrive to prevent or punish the authors of so horrid a villany. I am with much esteem,

Your humble servant.

[1] This and the letter following allude to the publication of the scurrilous "Epistle to Mr. Alexander Pope." Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot, and Swift are all abused with almost as little wit as decency. Afterwards Welsted and Smythe, two bitter enemies of Pope, were suspected; but at one time, says Thomas, "he suspected or pretended to suspect Lady Mary Wortley."

LXVIII.

TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.

Jan. 3 [1735].

Sir, — I have perused the last lampoon of your ingenious friend, and am not surprised you did not find me out under the name of Sappho, because there is nothing I ever heard in our characters or circumstances to make a parallel; but as the town (except you, who know better) generally suppose Pope means me whenever he mentions that name, I cannot help taking notice of the horrible malice he bears against the lady signified by that name, which appears to be irritated by supposing her writer of the verses to the Imitator of Horace. Now I can assure him they were wrote (without my knowledge) by a gentleman of great merit, whom I very much esteem,[1] who he will never guess, and who, if he did know, he durst not attack; but I own the design was so well meant and so excellently executed that I cannot be sorry they were written. I wish you would advise poor Pope to turn to some more honest livelihood than libelling. I know he will allege in his excuse that he must write to eat, and he is now grown sensible that nobody will buy his verses except their curiosity is piqued to it to see what is said of their acquaintance; but I think this method of gain so exceeding vile that it admits of no excuse at all. Can anything be more detestable than his abusing poor Moore, scarce cold in his grave, when it is plain he kept back his poem while

[1] Lord Hervey.

he lived for fear he should beat him for it? This is shocking to me, though of a man I never spoke to and hardly knew by sight; but I am seriously concerned at the worse scandal he has heaped on Mr. Congreve, who was my friend, and whom I am obliged to justify, because I can do it on my own knowledge and, which is yet farther, bring witness of it from those who were then often with me, that he was so far from loving Pope's rhyme, both that and his conversation were perpetual jokes to him, exceeding despicable in his opinion, and he has often made us laugh in talking of them, being particularly pleasant on that subject. As to Pope's being born of honest parents, I verily believe it, and will add one praise to his mother's character, that (though I only know her very old) she always appeared to me to have much better sense than himself. I desire, sir, as a favor, that you would show this letter to Pope, and you will very much oblige, sir,

Your humble servant.

LXIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

1738. [*March*, 1739.]

I AM so well acquainted with the lady you mention that I am not surprised at any proof of her want of judgment; she is one of those who has passed upon the world vivacity in the place of understanding; for me, who think with Boileau, —

"Rien n'est beau que le vrai, le vrai seul est aimable,"

I have always thought those geniuses much inferior to the plain sense of a cookmaid, who can make a good pudding and keep the kitchen in good order.

Here is no news to be sent you from this place, which has been for this fortnight, and still continues, overwhelmed with politics, and which are of so mysterious a nature, one ought to have some of the gifts of Lilly or Partridge to be able to write about them ; and I leave all those dissertations to those distinguished mortals who are endowed with the talent of divination, though I am at present the only one of my sex who seems to be of that opinion, — the ladies having shown their zeal and appetite for knowledge in a most glorious manner. At the last warm debate in the House of Lords, it was unanimously resolved that there should be no crowd of unnecessary auditors ; consequently the fair sex were excluded, and the gallery destined to the sole use of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding which determination, a tribe of dames resolved to show on this occasion that neither men nor laws could resist them. These heroines were Lady Huntingdon,[1] the Duchess of Queensberry, the Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Westmoreland, Lady Cobham, Lady Charlotte Edwin, Lady Archibald Hamilton and her daughter, Mrs. Scott, and Mrs. Pendarves, and Lady Frances Saunderson. I am thus particular in their names, since I look upon them to be the boldest assertors and most resigned sufferers for liberty I ever read of. They presented themselves at the door at nine o'clock in the morning, where Sir William Saunderson respectfully informed them the

[1] The friend of the Methodists.

Chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensberry, as head of the squadron, pished at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer, and desired him to let them upstairs privately. After some modest refusals, he swore by G—— he would not let them in. Her grace, with a noble warmth, answered, by G—— they would come in in spite of the Chancellor and the whole House. This being reported, the Peers resolved to starve them out; an order was made that the doors should not be opened till they had raised their siege. These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot-soldiers. They stood there till five in the afternoon; every now and then playing volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps against the door, with so much violence that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the two duchesses (very well apprised of the use of stratagems in war) commanded a dead silence of half an hour; and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence (the Commons also being very impatient to enter), gave order for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery. They stayed there till after eleven, when the House rose; and during the debate gave applause and showed marks of dislike, not only by smiles and winks (which have always been allowed in these cases), but by noisy laughs and apparent contempts; which is supposed the true reason why poor Lord Hervey spoke miserably. I beg your pardon, dear madam, for this long relation; but 't is

impossible to be short on so copious a subject; and you must own this action very well worthy of record, and I think not to be paralleled in history, ancient or modern. I look so little in my own eyes (who was at that time ingloriously sitting over a tea-table), I hardly dare subscribe myself even,

Yours.

LXX.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

DIJON, *Aug.* 18, N.S. [1739.][1]

I AM at length arrived here very safely, and without any bad accident; and so much mended in my health that I am surprised at it. France is so much improved, it is not to be known to be the same country we passed through twenty years ago. Everything I see speaks in praise of Cardinal Fleury, — the roads are all mended, and the greatest part of them paved as well as the streets of Paris, planted on both sides like the roads in Holland; and such good care taken against robbers, that you may cross the country with your purse in your hand, but as to travelling *incognito*, I may as well walk *incognito* in the Pall-Mall. There is not any town in France where there is not English, Scotch, or Irish families established; and I have met with people that have seen me (though

[1] This letter was written on her way to the Continent. She had parted from her husband, as it proved (although very possibly she was far from suspecting thus much) never to see him again.

often such as I do not remember to have seen) in every town I have passed through; and I think the farther I go the more acquaintance I meet. Here are in this town no less than sixteen English families of fashion. Lord Mansel lodges in the house with me, and a daughter of Lord Bathurst's, Mrs. Whichcote [Mrs. Whitshed], is in the same street. The Duke of Rutland is gone from hence some time ago, which Lady Peterborough told me at St. Omer's; which was one reason determined me to come here, thinking to be quiet; but I find it is impossible, and that will make me leave the place after the return of this post. The French are more changed than their roads; instead of pale, yellow faces, wrapped up in blankets, as we saw them, the villages are all filled with fresh-colored, lusty peasants, in good cloth and clean linen. It is incredible the air of plenty and content that is over the whole country. I hope to hear as soon as possible that you are in good health.

LXXI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[VENICE, about *February*, 1740.]

I CANNOT deny your ladyship's letter gave me a great deal of pleasure; but you have seasoned it with a great deal of pain, in the conclusion (after the many agreeable things you have said to me) that you are not entirely satisfied with me. You will not throw our separation on ill fortune; and I will not renew

the conversation of the fallen angels in Milton, who in contesting on predestination and free will, we are told, —

"They of the vain dispute could know no end."

Yet I know that neither my pleasures, my passions, nor my interests have ever disposed of me so much as little accidents, which, whether from chance or destiny, have always determined my choice. Here is weather, for example, which to the shame of all almanacs keeps on the depth of winter in the beginning of spring, and makes it as much impossible for me to pass the mountains of Bologna as it would be to wait on you in another planet, if you had taken up your residence in Venus or Mercury. However, I am fully determined to give myself that happiness; but when is out of my power to decide. You may imagine, apart from the gratitude I owe you and the inclination I feel for you, that I am impatient to hear good sense pronounced in my native tongue, having only heard my language out of the mouths of boys and governors for these five months. Here are inundations of them broke in upon us this carnival, and my apartment must be their refuge, the greater part of them having kept an inviolable fidelity to the languages their nurses taught them, their whole business abroad (as far as I can perceive) being to buy new clothes, — in which they shine in some obscure coffee-house where they are sure of meeting only one another, — and after the important conquest of some waiting gentlewoman of an opera queen, whom perhaps they remember as long as they live, return to

England excellent judges of men and manners. I find the spirit of patriotism so strong in me every time I see them that I look on them as the greatest blockheads in nature; and, to say truth, the compound of booby and *petit maître* makes up a very odd sort of animal. I hope we shall live to talk all these things over, and ten thousand more, which I reserve till the hour of meeting; which that it may soon arrive is the zealous wish of

Your ever faithful, etc.

LXXII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

[VENICE, about *April*, 1740.]

UPON my word, dear madam, I seriously intend myself the happiness of being with you this summer, but it cannot be till then; while the Prince of Saxony stays here I am engaged not to move, — not upon his account, as you may very well imagine, but here are many entertainments given and to be given him by the public, which it would be disobliging to my friends here to run away from; and I have received so many civilities from the first people here, I cannot refuse them the complaisance of passing the feast of the Ascension in their company, though 't is a real violence to my inclination to be so long deprived of yours, of which I know the value, and may say that I am just to you from judgment as well as pleased with you from taste. I envy nothing more

to Lady Walpole than your conversation, though I am glad you have met with hers. Have you not reasoned much on the surprising conclusion of Lord Scarborough? I confess I look upon his engagement with the duchess,[1] not as the cause, but sign, that he was mad. I could wish for some authentic account of her behavior on this occasion. I do not doubt she shines in it, as she has done in every other part of her life. I am almost inclined to superstition on this accident; and think it a judgment for the death of a poor silly soul,[2] that you know he caused some years ago.

I had a visit yesterday from a Greek called Cantacuzena, who had the honor to see your ladyship, as he says, often at Florence, and gave me the pleasure of speaking of you in the manner I think. Prince Beauveau and Lord Shrewsbury intend to leave us in a few days for the Conclave. We expect after it a fresh cargo of English; but God be praised, I hear of no ladies among them, — Mrs. Lethuilier was the last that gave comedies in this town, and she had

[1] Lord Scarborough was engaged to marry the Duchess of Manchester. The day before his wedding day he killed himself, — it was thought, in a fit of insanity.

[2] This was Lady Mary's own sister-in-law, the widow Lady Kingston, who with a weak understanding had strong affections, and devoted them all to Lord Scarborough. She thought him so firmly engaged to her that she even taught her children to call him *papa*. But falling ill and sending for him, she received such a shock from a cold slighting answer he gave to something she said about their future marriage, that she turned on her pillow, and spoke to him no more. As she died a day or two afterwards, Lady Mary might justly accuse him of having struck the death-blow. — W.

made her exit before I came; which I look upon as a great blessing. I have nothing to complain of here but too much diversion, as it is called; and which literally diverts me from amusements much more agreeable. I can hardly believe it is me dressed up at balls, and stalking about at assemblies; and should not be so much surprised at suffering any of Ovid's transformations, having more disposition, as I thought, to harden into stone or timber than to be enlivened into these tumultuary entertainments, where I am amazed to find myself seated by a sovereign prince, after travelling a thousand miles to establish myself in the bosom of a republic, with a design to lose all memory of kings and courts. Won't you admire the force of destiny? I remember my contracting an intimacy with a girl[1] in a village, as the most distant thing on earth from power and politics. Fortune tosses her up (in a double sense), and I am embroiled in a thousand affairs that I had resolved to avoid as long as I lived. Say what you please, madam, we are pushed about by a superior hand, and there is some predestination, as well as a great deal of free will, in my being

Faithfully yours, etc.

[1] Miss Skerrit, afterward Lady Walpole. — Ed.

LXXIII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

LEGHORN, *Feb.* 25, N. S. [1741].

I ARRIVED here last night, and have received this morning the bill of nine hundred and five dollars, odd money.

I shall be a little more particular in my accounts from hence than I durst be from Rome, where all the letters are opened and often stopped. I hope you had mine, relating to the antiquities in Naples. I shall now say something of the court of Rome. The first minister, Cardinal Valenti, has one of the best characters I ever heard [of], though of no great birth, and has made his fortune by an attachment to the Duchess of Salviati. The present Pope is very much beloved, and seems desirous to ease the people and deliver them out of the miserable poverty they are reduced to. I will send you the history of his elevation, as I had it from a very good hand, if it will be any amusement to you. I never saw the Chevalier[1] during my whole stay at Rome. I saw his two sons at a public ball in masque; they were very richly adorned with jewels. The eldest seems thoughtless enough, and is really not unlike Mr. Lyttelton in his shape and air. The youngest is very well made, dances finely, and has an ingenuous countenance; he is but fourteen years of age. The family live very splendidly, yet pay everybody, and (wherever they get it) are certainly in no want of

[1] Otherwise the Pretender.

money. I heard at Rome the true, tragical history of the Princess Sobieski, which is very different from what was said at London. The pop Clement the Twelfth was commonly supposed her lover, and she used to go about publicly in his state coach, to the great scandal of the people. Her husband's mistress spirited him up to resent it, so far that he left Rome upon it, and she retired to a convent, where she destroyed herself. The English travellers at Rome behave in general very discreetly. I have reason to speak well of them, since they were all exceeding obliging to me. It may sound a little vain to say it, but they really paid a regular court to me, as if I had been their queen, and their governors told me that the desire of my approbation had a very great influence on their conduct. While I stayed there was neither gaming nor any sort of extravagance. I used to preach to them very freely, and they all thanked me for it. I shall stay some time in this town, where I expect Lady Pomfret. I think I have answered every particular you seemed curious about. If there be any other point you would have me speak of, I will be as exact as I can. Direct, "Recommandé à Monsieur Jackson, Négociant à Livourne l'Anglais."

LXXIV.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

GENOA, *Aug.* 15, N. S. [1741].

I AM sorry to trouble you on so disagreeable a subject as our son, but I received a letter from him

last post, in which he solicits your dissolving his marriage, as if it was wholly in your power, and the reason he gives for it is so that he may marry more to your satisfaction. It is very vexatious (though no more than I expected) that time has no effect, and that it is impossible to convince him of his true situation. He enclosed this letter in one to Mr. Birtles, and tells me that he does not doubt that debt of two hundred pounds is paid. You may imagine this silly proceeding occasioned me a dun from Mr. Birtles. I told him the person that wrote the letter was to my knowledge not worth a groat, which was all I thought proper to say on the subject. Here is arrived a little while since Count ——, who was president of the council of war, and enjoyed many other great places under the late emperor. He is a Spaniard. The next day after his arrival, he went to the Doge, and declared himself his subject, and from thence to the archbishop, and desired to be received as one of his flock. He has taken a great house at Pierre l'Arène, where he sees few people, but what I think particular, he has brought with him thirty-five cases of books. I have had a particular account of Lord Oxford's death[1] from a very good hand, which he advanced by choice, refusing all remedies till it was too late to make use of them. There was a will found, dated 1728, in which he gave everything to my lady, which has affected her very much. Notwithstanding the many reasons she

[1] The Earl of Oxford had a fortune of five hundred thousand pounds, out of which he was said to have saved only a hundred thousand.

had to complain of him, I always thought there was more weakness than dishonesty in his actions, and is a confirmation of the truth of that maxim of Mr. Rochefoucault, "un sot n'a pas assez d'étoffe pour être honnête homme."

LXXV.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

GENEVA, *Oct.* 12, [1741].

I ARRIVED here last night, where I find everything quite different from what it was represented to me; it is not the first time it has happened to me on my travels. Everything is as dear as it is at London. 'T is true, as all equipages are forbidden, that expense is entirely retrenched. I have been visited this morning by some of the chief people in the town, who seem extreme good sort of people, which is their general character; very desirous of attracting strangers to inhabit with them, and consequently very officious in all they imagine can please them. The way of living is absolutely the reverse of that in Italy. Here is no show, and a great deal of eating; there is all the magnificence imaginable, and no dinners but on particular occasions; yet the difference of the prices renders the total expense very near equal. As I am not yet determined whether I shall make any considerable stay, I desire not to have the money you intend me till I ask for it. If you have any curiosity for the present state of any of the States of Italy, I believe I can give you a truer ac-

count than perhaps any other traveller can do, having always had the good fortune of a sort of intimacy with the first persons in the governments where I resided, and they not guarding themselves against the observations of a woman, as they would have done from those of a man.

LXXVI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET.

CHAMBERY, *December* 3, N. S. [1741].

AT length, dear madam, I have the pleasure of hearing from you ; I hope you have found everything in London to your satisfaction. I believe it will be a little surprise to you to hear that I am fixed for this winter in this little obscure town, which is generally so much unknown that a description of it will at least have novelty to recommend it. Here is the most profound peace and unbounded plenty that is to be found in any corner of the universe, but not one rag of money. For my part, I think it amounts to the same thing whether one is obliged to give several pence for bread or can have a great deal of bread for a penny, since the Savoyard nobility here keep as good tables, without money, as those in London who spend in a week what would be here a considerable yearly revenue. Wine which is equal to the best Burgundy is sold for a penny a quart, and I have a cook for very small wages that is capable of rivalling Chloé.[1] Here are no equipages but chairs, the hire

[1] The Duke of Manchester's cook.

of which is about a crown a week, and all other matters proportionable. I can assure you I make the figure of the Duchess of Marlborough by carrying gold in my purse, — there being no visible coin but copper. Yet we are all people that can produce pedigrees to serve for the Order of Malta. Many of us have travelled, and 't is the fashion to love reading. We eat together perpetually, and have assemblies every night for conversation. To say truth, the houses are all built after the manner of the old English towns, nobody having had money to build for two hundred years past. Consequently the walls are thick, the roofs low, etc., the streets narrow and miserably paved. However, a concurrence of circumstances obliges me to this residence for some time. You have not told me your thoughts of Venice. I heartily regret the loss of those letters you mention, and have no comfort but in the hopes of a more regular correspondence for the future. I cannot compassionate the Countess, since I think her insolent character deserves all the mortifications Heaven can send her. It will be charity to send me what news you pick up, which will be always shown advantageously by your relation. I must depend upon your goodness for this, since I can promise you no return from hence but the assurance that I am,

Ever faithfully yours.

Be pleased to direct as before, to Monsieur Villette, as the super-direction. Here are no such vanities as gilt paper, therefore you must excuse the want of it.

LXXVII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

LYONS, *April* 23, N. S. [1742].

I HAVE this minute received four letters from you, dated February 1, February 22, March 22, March 29. I fancy their lying so long in the post-offices may proceed from your forgetting to frank them, which I am informed is quite necessary. I am very glad you have been prevailed on to let our son take a commission. If you had prevented it he would have always said, and perhaps thought, and persuaded other people you had hindered his rising in the world; though I am fully persuaded that he can never make a tolerable figure in any station of life. When he was at Morins, on his first leaving France, I then tried to prevail with him to serve the Emperor as volunteer, and represented to him that a handsome behavior one campaign might go a great way in retrieving his character, and offered to use my interest with you (which I said I did not doubt would succeed) to furnish him with a handsome equipage. He then answered he supposed I wished him killed out of the way. I am afraid his pretended reformation is not very sincere. I wish time may prove me in the wrong. I here enclose the last letter I received from him; I answered it the following post in these words: —

"I am very glad you resolve to continue obedient to your father, and are sensible of his goodness towards you. Mr. Birtles showed me your letter to

him, in which you enclosed yours to me, where you speak to him as your friend, subscribing yourself his faithful, humble servant. He was at Genoa in his uncle's house when you was there, and well acquainted with you, though you seem ignorant of everything relating to him. I wish you would make such sort of apologies for any errors you may commit. I pray God your future behavior may redeem the past, which will be a great blessing to your affectionate mother."

I have not since heard from him; I suppose he knew not what to say to so plain a detected falsehood. It is very disagreeable to me to converse with one from whom I do not expect to hear a word of truth, and who, I am very sure, will repeat many things that never passed in our conversation. You see the most solemn assurances are not binding from him, since he could come to London in opposition to your commands, after having so frequently protested he would not move a step except by your order. However, as you insist on my seeing him, I will do it, and think Valence the properest town for that interview. . . .

I shall stay here till I have an answer to this letter. If you order your son to go to Valence, I desire you would give him a strict command of going by a feigned name. I do not doubt your returning me whatever money I may give him; but as I believe if he receives money from me, he will be making me frequent visits, it is clearly my opinion I should give him none. Whatever you may think proper for his journey, you may remit to him.

I am very sorry for my daughter's loss,[1] being sensible how much it may affect her, though I suppose it will be soon repaired. It is a great pleasure to me when I hear she is happy. I wrote to her last post, and will write again the next.

Since I wrote, I have looked everywhere for my son's letter, which I find has been mislaid in the journey. There is nothing more in it than long professions of doing nothing but by your command; and a positive assertion that he was ignorant of Mr. Birtles's relation to the late consul.

LXXVIII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

AVIGNON, *June* 10, N. S. [174?].

I AM just returned from passing two days with our son, of whom I will give you the most exact account I am capable of. He is so much altered in his person, I should scarcely have known him. He has entirely lost his beauty, and looks at least seven years older than he is; and the wildness that he always had in his eyes is so much increased it is downright shocking, and I am afraid will end fatally. He is grown fat, but is still genteel, and has an air of politeness that is agreeable. He speaks French like a Frenchman, and has got all the fashionable expressions of that language, and a volubility of words which he always had, and which I do not wonder should pass for wit with inconsiderate people. His behavior is perfectly civil, and I found him very submissive; but

[1] Lady Bute had just lost her infant son.

in the main no way really improved in his understanding, which is exceedingly weak; and I am convinced he will always be led by the person he converses with either right or wrong, not being capable of forming any fixed judgment of his own. As to his enthusiasm, if he had it, I suppose he has already lost it; since I could perceive no turn of it in all his conversation. But with his head I believe it is possible to make him a monk one day and a Turk[1] three days after. He has a flattering, insinuating manner, which naturally prejudices strangers in his favor. He began to talk to me in the usual silly cant I have so often heard from him, which I shortened by telling him I desired not to be troubled with it; that professions were of no use where actions were expected; and that the only thing could give me hopes of a good conduct was regularity and truth. He very readily agreed to all I said (as indeed he has always done when he has not been hot-headed). I endeavored to convince him how favorably he has been dealt with, his allowance being much more than, had I been his father, I would have given in the same case. The Prince of Hesse, who is now married to the Princess of England, lived some years at Geneva on three hundred pounds per annum. Lord Hervey sent his son at sixteen hither, and to travel afterwards, on no larger pension than two hundred pounds; and, though without a governor, he had

[1] This prediction was oddly enough fulfilled. Edward Wortley Montagu did at a later period assume the dress and customs of the Turks, abjuring (according to rumor) the Christian religion, and embracing Mahometanism with ostentatious fervor.

reason enough not only to live within the compass of it, but carried home little presents for his father and mother, which he showed me at Turin. In short, I know there is no place so expensive but a prudent single man may live in it on one hundred pounds per annum, and an extravagant one may run out ten thousand in the cheapest. Had you (said I to him) thought rightly, or would have regarded the advice I gave you in all my letters, while in the little town of Islestein you would have laid up one hundred and fifty pounds per annum; you would now have had seven hundred and fifty pounds in your pocket; which would have almost paid your debts, and such a management would have gained you the esteem of the reasonable part of mankind. I perceived this reflection, which he had never made himself, had a very great weight with him. He would have excused part of his follies by saying Mr. G. had told him it became Mr. W.'s son to live handsomely. I made answer that whether Mr. G. had said so or no, the good sense of the thing was no way altered by it; that the true figure of a man was the opinion the world had of his sense and probity, and not the idle expenses which were only respected by foolish or ignorant people; that his case was particular, — he had but too publicly shown his inclination to vanities, and the most becoming part he could now act would be owning the ill use he had made of his father's indulgence, and professing to endeavor to be no further expense to him, instead of scandalous complaints, and being always at his last shirt and last guinea, which any man of spirit would be ashamed to

own. I prevailed so far with him that he seemed very willing to follow this advice; and I gave him a paragraph to write to G., which I suppose you will easily distinguish from the rest of his letter. He asked me if you had settled your estate. I made answer that I did not doubt (like all other wise men) you always had a will by you; but that you had certainly not put anything out of your power to change. On that, he began to insinuate that if I could prevail on you to settle the estate on him, I might expect anything from his gratitude. I made him a very clear and positive answer in these words: "I hope your father will outlive me; and if I should be so unfortunate to have it otherwise, I do not believe he will leave me in your power. But was I sure of the contrary, no interest nor no necessity shall ever make me act against my honor or conscience; and I plainly tell you that I will never persuade your father to do anything for you till I think you deserve it." He answered by great promises of future good behavior and economy. He is highly delighted with the prospect of going into the army, and mightily pleased with the good reception he had from Lord St. [Stair]; though I find it amounts to no more than telling him he was sorry he had already named his aides-de-camp, and otherwise should have been glad of him in that post. He says Lord C. [Carteret] has confirmed to him his promise of a commission.

The rest of his conversation was extremely gay. The various things he has seen have given him a superficial universal knowledge. He really knows most of the modern languages, and if I could believe him,

can read Arabic, and has read the Bible in Hebrew. He said it was impossible for him to avoid going back to Paris; but he promised me to lie but one night there, and go to a town six posts from thence on the Flanders road, where he would wait your orders, and go by the name of Monsieur du Durand, a Dutch officer; under which name I saw him. These are the most material passages, and my eyes are so much tired I can write no more at this time. I gave him two hundred and forty livres for his journey.

LXXIX.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

AVIGNON, *March* 25 [1744].

I TAKE this opportunity of informing you in what manner I came acquainted with the secret I hinted at in my letter of the 5th of February. The society of Freemasons at Nismes presented the Duke of Richelieu, governor of Languedoc, with a magnificent entertainment; it is but one day's post from hence, and the Duchess of Crillon, with some other ladies of this town, resolved to be at it, and almost by force carried me with them, which I am tempted to believe an act of Providence, considering my great reluctance, and the service it proved to be to unhappy innocent people. The greatest part of the town of Nismes are secret Protestants, which are still severely punished according to the edicts of Lewis XIV. whenever they are detected in any public worship. A few days before we came, they had as-

sembled; their minister and about a dozen of his congregation were seized and imprisoned. I knew nothing of this; but I had not been in the town two hours when I was visited by two of the most considerable of the Huguenots, who came to beg of me, with tears, to speak in their favor to the Duke of Richelieu, saying none of the Catholics would do it, and the Protestants durst not, and that God had sent me for their protection. The Duke of Richelieu was too well-bred to refuse to listen to a lady, and I was of a rank and nation to have liberty to say what I pleased. They moved my compassion so much, I resolved to use my endeavors to serve them, though I had little hope of succeeding. I would not therefore dress myself for the supper, but went in a domino to the ball, a masque giving opportunity of talking in a freer manner than I could have done without it. I was at no trouble in engaging his conversation; the ladies having told him I was there, he immediately advanced towards me; and I found, from a different motive, he had a great desire to be acquainted with me, having heard a great deal of me. After abundance of compliments of that sort, I made my request for the liberty of the poor Protestants; He with great freedom told me he was so little a bigot, he pitied them as much as I did, but his orders from court were to send them to the galleys. However, to show how much he desired my good opinion, he was returning, and would solicit their freedom (which he has since obtained). This obligation occasioned me to continue the conversation, and he asked me what party the Pretender had in

England; I answered, as I thought a very small one. "We are told otherwise at Paris," said he; "however, a bustle at this time may serve to facilitate our other projects, and we intend to attempt a descent; at least it will cause the troops to be recalled, and perhaps Admiral Mathews will be obliged to leave the passage open for Don Philip." You may imagine how much I wished to give you immediate notice of this; but as all letters are opened at Paris, it would have been to no purpose to write it by the post, and have only gained me a powerful enemy in the court of France, he being so much a favorite of the king's, he is supposed to stand candidate for the ministry. In my letter to Sir R[obert] W[alpole] from Venice, I offered my service, and desired to know in what manner I could send intelligence, if anything happened to my knowledge that could be of use to England. I believe he imagined that I wanted some gratification, and only sent me cold thanks. I have wrote to you by the post an account of my servant's leaving me. As that is only a domestic affair, I suppose the letter may be suffered to pass. I have had no letter from my son, and am very sure he is in the wrong, whenever he does not follow your direction, who, apart from other considerations, have a stronger judgment than any of his advisers.

LXXX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[*Received at Dover Street, Monday, June* 4, *O. S.*]

[AVIGNON], *June* 1, N. S. [1744].

DEAREST MADAM, — I have many thanks to give you for the agreeable news of your health (which is always in the first place regarded by me), and the safe delivery of the Duchess of Portland,[1] whose little son will, I hope, grow up a blessing to you both. I heartily congratulate your ladyship on this increase of your family; may you long enjoy the happiness of seeing their prosperity!

I am less surprised at Lady Sophia's marriage than at the fortune Lord Pomfret has given her; she had charms enough to expect to make her fortune, and I believe the raising of such a sum must be uneasy in his present circumstances. By the accounts I have received of Lady John Sackville,[2] I think the young couple are much to be pitied, and am sorry to hear their relations treat them with so much severity; if I was in England, I would endeavor to serve them.

Mrs. Hay has behaved to me with a great deal of impertinence; there is no principle to be expected from a woman of her character. Your ladyship need

[1] Her daughter.

[2] It was a secret marriage, only avowed after the birth of the young couple's child. Lady Sackville was a sister of the Duchess of Bedford and Lady Mary's niece.

not mention your command of continuing our correspondence; it is the only comfort of my life, and I should think myself the last of human beings if I was capable of forgetting the many obligations I have to you; if you could see my heart, you would never mention anything of that kind to me; it is impossible to have a more tender and grateful sense of all your goodness, which, added to the real esteem I have of your merit, binds me to be eternally and inviolably your ladyship's most sincere and devoted servant.

Your ladyship will permit me to offer my compliments to the Duke and Duchess of Portland.

LXXXI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF OXFORD.

[*Came to Dover street, Tuesday, September* 18, *O. S.; received at Welbeck, Thursday, September* 20.]

AVIGNON, *Sept.* 14, N. S. [1744].

THE disorder of your ladyship's health which you mention gives me the highest concern, though I hope it is now over, and that the good air of Welbeck will wholly establish it. I beg of you with the utmost earnestness that you would be careful of yourself; I can receive no proof of your friendship so obliging to me, though I am yours by every tie that can engage a grateful heart. Mr. Wortley has said nothing to me of his visit to your ladyship, nor can I guess on what account it was, but suppose it relating to some country interest; I know so well your just way

of thinking, that I am sure you always act right. Mrs. Massam informed me of the hard fortune of poor Lady Euston. I very much pity Lady Burlington, but should do it yet more, if there had not been some circumstances in her marrying her daughter which make her in some measure blamable for the event; however, there can be no excuse for the brutal behavior of her worthless husband.[1] Your happy disposition of the charming Duchess of Portland secures you from all sorrows of that kind, and I pray to God you may live to see your grandchildren as happily settled. Your life is the greatest blessing that can be bestowed on your family; I am fully persuaded they all think so, and I hope that consideration will be of force to make you careful to preserve it. I need not add how dear it is to me, being to my last moment, dearest madam, with the tenderest affection,

Your ladyship's devoted servant.

[1] Horace Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann, June 20, 1743, —

"Upon a picture of Lady Dorothy, at the Duke of Devonshire's at Chiswick, is the following touching inscription, written by her mother, which commemorates her virtues and her fate: —

"'Lady Dorothy Boyle, born May the 14th, 1724. She was the comfort and joy of her parents, the delight of all who knew her angelic temper, and the admiration of all who saw her beauty. She was married October 10th, 1741, and delivered (by death) from misery, May the 2nd, 1742. This picture was drawn seven weeks after her death (from memory), by her most affectionate mother, Dorothy Burlington.'"

LXXXII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

BRESCIA, *Dec.* 17, N. S. (1747).

DEAR CHILD, — I received yours of October 14 but yesterday; the negligence of the post is very disagreeable. I have at length had a letter from Lady Oxford, by which I find mine to her has miscarried, and perhaps the answer which I have now wrote may have the same fate.

I wish you joy of your young son; may he live to be a blessing to you. I find I amuse myself here in the same manner as if at London, according to your account of it; that is, I play at whist every night with some old priests that I have taught it to, and are my only companions. To say truth, the decay of my sight will no longer suffer me to read by candle-light, and the evenings are now long and dark, that I am forced to stay at home. I believe you'll be persuaded my gaming makes nobody uneasy, when I tell you that we play only a penny per corner. 'T is now a year that I have lived wholly in the country, and have no design of quitting it. I am entirely given up to rural amusements, and have forgot there are any such things as wits or fine ladies in the world. However, I am pleased to hear what happens to my acquaintance. I wish you would inform me what is become of the Pomfret family, and who Sir Francis Dashwood has married. I knew him at Florence; he seemed so nice in the choice of

a wife I have some curiosity to know who it is that has had charms enough to make him enter into an engagement he used to speak of with fear and trembling.

I am ever, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

My service to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

LXXXIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

BRESCIA, *Jan.* 5, [1748].

DEAR CHILD, — I am glad to hear that yourself and family are in good health; as to the alteration you say you find in the world, it is only owing to your being better acquainted with it. I have never in all my various travels seen but two sorts of people, and those very like one another; I mean men and women, who always have been and ever will be the same. The same vices and the same follies have been the fruit of all ages, though sometimes under different names. I remember, when I returned from Turkey, meeting with the same affectation of youth amongst my acquaintance that you now mention amongst yours, and I do not doubt but your daughter will find the same twenty years hence among hers. One of the greatest happinesses of youth is the ignorance of evil, though it is often the ground of great indiscretions, and sometimes the active part of life is over before an honest mind finds out how

one ought to act in such a world as this. I am as much removed from it as it is possible to be on this side the grave, which is from my own inclination, for I might have even here a great deal of company, — the way of living in this province being what I believe it is now in the sociable part of Scotland, and was in England a hundred years ago. I had a visit in the beginning of these holidays of thirty horse of ladies and gentlemen, with their servants (by the way, the ladies all ride like the late Duchess of Cleveland).[1] They came with the kind intent of staying with me at least a fortnight, though I had never seen any of them before; but they were all neighbors within ten miles round. I could not avoid entertaining them at supper, and by good luck had a large quantity of game in the house, which with the help of my poultry furnished out a plentiful table. I sent for the fiddles, and they were so obliging as to dance all night, and even dine with me next day, though none of them had been in bed, and were much disappointed I did not press them to stay, it being the fashion to go in troops to one another's houses, hunting and dancing together a month in each castle. I have not yet returned any of their visits, nor do not intend it of some time, to avoid this expensive hospitality. The trouble of it is not very great, they not expecting any ceremony. I left the room about one o'clock, and they continued their ball in the saloon above stairs, without being at all offended at my departure. But the greatest

[1] In the fashion that is now being revived by a few adventurous riders. Lady Mary subsequently adopted it herself.

diversion I had was to see a lady of my own age comfortably dancing with her own husband, some years older; and I can assert that she jumps and gallops with the best of them.

May you always be as well satisfied with your family as you are at present, and your children return in your age the tender care you have of their infancy. I know no greater happiness that can be wished for you by your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my grandchildren.

LXXXIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 10, N. S. [1748].

I GIVE you thanks, dear child, for your entertaining account of your present diversions. I find the public calamities have no influence on the pleasures of the town. I remember very well the play of the Revenge, having been once acquainted with a party that intended to represent it (not one of which is now alive). I wish you had told me who acted the principal parts. I suppose Lord Bute was Alonzo, by the magnificence of his dress. I think they have mended their choice in the Orphan; I saw it played at Westminster school, where Lord Erskine was Monimia, and then one of the most beautiful figures that could be seen. I have had here (in low life) some amusements of the same sort. I believe I wrote you word I intended to go to the opera at Brescia; but the weather being cold, and the roads

bad, prevented my journey; and the people of this village (which is the largest I know; the curate tells me he has two thousand communicants) presented me a petition for leave to erect a theatre in my saloon. This house has stood empty many years before I took it, and they were accustomed to turn the stables into a playhouse every carnival; it is now occupied by my horses, and they had no other place proper for a stage. I easily complied with their request, and was surprised at the beauty of their scenes, which, though painted by a country painter, are better colored, and the perspective better managed, than in any of the second-rate theatres in London. I liked it so well, it is not yet pulled down. The performance was yet more surprising, the actors being all peasants; but the Italians have so natural a genius for comedy, they acted as well as if they had been brought up to nothing else, particularly the Arlequin, who far surpassed any of our English, though only the tailor of the village, and I am assured never saw a play in any other place. It is a pity they have not better poets, the pieces being not at all superior to our drolls. The music, habits, and illumination were at the expense of the parish, and the whole entertainment, which lasted the three last days of the carnival, cost me only a barrel of wine, which I gave the actors, and is not so dear as small beer in London. At present, as the old song says, —

"All my whole care
Is my farming affair,
To make my corn grow, and my apple-trees bear."

My improvements give me great pleasure, and so much profit that if I could live a hundred years longer, I should certainly provide for all my grandchildren; but, alas! as the Italians say, "H'o sonato vingt & quatro ora," and it is not long I must expect to write myself your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to your little ones.

LXXXV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[*July* 10, 1748.]

DEAR CHILD, — . . . I have been these six weeks, and still am, at my dairy-house, which joins to my garden. I believe I have already told you it is a long mile from the castle, which is situate in the midst of a very large village, once a considerable town, part of the walls still remaining, and has not vacant ground enough about it to make a garden, which is my greatest amusement, it being now troublesome to walk, or even go in the chaise till the evening. I have fitted up in this farmhouse a room for myself; that is to say, strewed the floor with rushes, covered the chimney with moss and branches, and adorned the room with basins of earthenware (which is made here to great perfection) filled with flowers, and put in some straw chairs, and a couch bed, which is my whole furniture. This spot of ground is so beautiful, I am afraid you will scarce credit the description, which, however, I can assure you, shall be very

literal, without any embellishment from imagination. It is on a bank, forming a kind of peninsula, raised from the river Oglio fifty feet, to which you may descend by easy stairs cut in the turf, and either take the air on the river, which is as large as the Thames at Richmond, or by walking [in] an avenue two hundred yards on the side of it, you find a wood of a hundred acres, which was already cut into walks and ridings when I took it. I have only added fifteen bowers in different views, with seats of turf. They were easily made, here being a large quantity of underwood, and a great number of wild vines, which twist to the top of the highest trees, and from which they make a very good sort of wine they call *brusco*. I am now writing to you in one of these arbors, which is so thickly shaded, the sun is not troublesome even at noon. Another is on the side of the river, where I have made a camp kitchen, that I may take the fish, dress and eat it immediately, and at the same time see the barks which ascend or descend every day to or from Mantua, Guastalla, or Pont de Vie, all considerable towns. This little wood is carpeted, in their succeeding seasons, with violets and strawberries, inhabited by a nation of nightingales, and filled with game of all kinds, excepting deer and wild boar, the first being unknown here, and not being large enough for the other.

My garden was a plain vineyard when it came into my hands not two years ago; and it is, with a small expense, turned into a garden that (apart from the advantage of the climate) I like better than that of Kensington. The Italian vineyards are not planted

like those in France, but in clumps, fastened to trees planted in equal ranks (commonly fruit-trees), and continued in festoons from one to another, which I have turned into covered galleries of shade, that I can walk in the heat without being incommoded by it. I have made a dining-room of verdure, capable of holding a table of twenty covers; the whole ground is three hundred and seventeen feet in length and two hundred in breadth. You see it is far from large; but so prettily disposed (though I say it) that I never saw a more agreeable rustic garden, abounding with all sort of fruit; and produces a variety of wines. I would send you a piece if I did not fear the customs would make you pay too dear for it. I believe my description gives you but an imperfect idea of my garden. Perhaps I shall succeed better in describing my manner of life, which is as regular as that of any monastery. I generally rise at six, and as soon as I have breakfasted, put myself at the head of my weeder women and work with them till nine. I then inspect my dairy, and take a turn among my poultry, which is a very large inquiry. I have, at present, two hundred chickens, besides turkeys, geese, ducks, and peacocks. All things have hitherto prospered under my care; my bees and silkworms are doubled, and I am told that, without accidents, my capital will be so in two years' time. At eleven o'clock I retire to my books: I dare not indulge myself in that pleasure above an hour. At twelve I constantly dine, and sleep after dinner till about three. I then send for some of my old priests, and either play at piquet or whist till

't is cool enough to go out. One evening I walk in my wood, where I often sup, take the air on horseback the next, and go on the water the third. The fishery of this part of the river belongs to me; and my fisherman's little boat (where I have a green lutestring awning) serves me for a barge. He and his son are my rowers without any expense, he being very well paid by the profit of the fish, which I give him on condition of having every day one dish for my table. Here is plenty of every sort of fresh-water fish (excepting salmon); but we have a large trout so like it, that I, that have almost forgot the taste, do not distinguish it.

We are both placed properly in regard to our different times of life, — you amidst the fair, the gallant, and the gay; I in a retreat where I enjoy every amusement that solitude can afford. I confess I sometimes wish for a little conversation; but I reflect that the commerce of the world gives more uneasiness than pleasure, and quiet is all the hope that can reasonably be indulged at my age. My letter is of an unconscionable length; I should ask your pardon for it, but I had a mind to give you an idea of my passing my time; take it as an instance of the affection of, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all my grandchildren.

LXXXVI.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

July 17, N. S. [1748].

. . . . . .

I am glad my daughter's conduct justifies the opinion I always had of her understanding. I do not wonder at her being well received in sets of company different from one another, having myself preserved a long intimacy with the Duchesses of Marlborough and Montagu, though they were at open war, and perpetually talking of their complaints. I believe they were both sensible I never betrayed either; each of them giving me the strongest proofs of confidence in the last conversations I had with them, which were the last I had in England. What I think extraordinary is my daughter's continuing so many years agreeable to Lord Bute, — Mr. Mackenzie telling me the last time I saw him that his brother frequently said among his companions that he was still as much in love with his wife as before he married her. If the princess's favor lasts it may be of use to her family. I have often been dubious if the seeming indifference of her Highness's behavior was owing to very good sense or great insensibility; should it be the first, she will get the better of all her rivals, and probably one day have a large share of power.

I send you my son's letter and a copy of my answer to it. I should be glad to hear you approved it.

I am very much pleased that you accustom yourself to tea, being persuaded that the moderate use of

it is generally wholesome. I have planted a great deal in my garden, which is a fashion lately introduced in this country, and has succeeded very well. I cannot say it is as strong as the Indian, but [it] has the advantage of being fresher, and at least unmixed.

LXXXVII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Feb. 19, N. S. [1749].

My dear Child, — I gave you some general thoughts on the education of your children in my last letter; but fearing you should think I neglected your request by answering it with too much conciseness, I am resolved to add to it what little I know on that subject, and which may perhaps be useful to you in a concern with which you seem so nearly affected.

People commonly educate their children as they build their houses, — according to some plan they think beautiful, without considering whether it is suited to the purposes for which they are designed. Almost all girls of quality are educated as if they were to be great ladies, which is often as little to be expected as an immoderate heat of the sun in the north of Scotland. You should teach yours to confine their desires to probabilities, to be as useful as is possible to themselves, and to think privacy (as it is) the happiest state of life. I do not doubt your giving them all the instructions necessary to form them to a

virtuous life; but 't is a fatal mistake to do this without proper restrictions. Vices are often hid under the name of virtues, and the practice of them followed by the worst of consequences. Sincerity, friendship, piety, disinterestedness, and generosity are all great virtues; but pursued without discretion become criminal. I have seen ladies indulge their own ill-humor by being very rude and impertinent, and think they deserved approbation by saying, "I love to speak truth." One of your acquaintance made a ball the next day after her mother died, to show she was sincere. I believe your own reflection will furnish you with but too many examples of the ill effects of the rest of the sentiments I have mentioned when too warmly embraced. They are generally recommended to young people without limits or distinction, and this prejudice hurries them into great misfortunes, while they are applauding themselves in the noble practice (as they fancy) of very eminent virtues.

I cannot help adding (out of my real affection to you), I wish you would moderate that fondness you have for your children. I do not mean you should abate any part of your care or not do your duty to them in its utmost extent; but I would have you early prepare yourself for disappointments, which are heavy in proportion to their being surprising. It is hardly possible in such a number that none should be unhappy; prepare yourself against a misfortune of that kind. I confess there is hardly any more difficult to support; yet it is certain imagination has a great share in the pain of it, and it is more in our power than it is commonly believed to soften what-

ever ills are founded or augmented by fancy. Strictly speaking, there is but one real evil. — I mean acute pain; all other complaints are so considerably diminished by time that it is plain the grief is owing to our passion, since the sensation of it vanishes when that is over.

There is another mistake I forgot to mention usual in mothers. If any of their daughters are beauties they take great pains to persuade them that they are ugly, or at least that they think so, which the young woman never fails to believe springs from envy, and is perhaps not much in the wrong. I would if possible give them a just notion of their figure, and show them how far it is valuable. Every advantage has its price, and may be either over or under valued. It is the common doctrine of (what are called) good books to inspire a contempt of beauty, riches, greatness, etc., which has done as much mischief among the young of our sex as an over-eager desire of them. They should not look on these things as blessings where they are bestowed, though not necessaries that it is impossible to be happy without. I am persuaded the ruin of Lady F. [Frances] M. [Meadows] was in great measure owing to the notions given her by the silly good people that had the care of her. 'T is true, her circumstances and your daughters' are very different; they should be taught to be content with privacy, and yet not neglect good fortune if it should be offered them.

I am afraid I have tired you with my instructions. I do not give them as believing my age has furnished me with superior wisdom, but in compliance with

your desire, and being fond of every opportunity that gives a proof of the tenderness with which I am ever,

Your affectionate mother.

LXXXVIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

June 22, N. S. [1750].

My dear Child, — Since you tell me my letters (such as they are) are agreeable to you, I shall for the future indulge myself in thinking upon paper when I write to you.

I cannot believe Sir John's[1] advancement is owing to his merit, though he certainly deserves such a distinction; but I am persuaded the present disposers of such dignities are neither more clear-sighted or more disinterested than their predecessors. Ever since I knew the world, Irish patents have been hung out to sale, like the laced and embroidered coats in Monmouth Street, and bought up by the same sort of people; I mean those who had rather wear shabby finery than no finery at all; though I do not suppose this was Sir John's case. That good creature (as the country saying is) has not a bit of pride in him. I dare swear he purchased his title for the same reason he used to purchase pictures in Italy; not because he wanted to buy, but because somebody or other wanted to sell. He hardly ever

[1] Sir John Rawdon.

opened his mouth but to say, "What you please, sir;" "At your service;" "Your humble servant;" or some gentle expression to the same effect. It is scarce credible that with this unlimited complaisance he should draw a blow upon himself; yet it so happened that one of his own countrymen was brute enough to strike him. As it was done before many witnesses, Lord Mansel heard of it; and thinking that if poor Sir John took no notice of it, he would suffer daily insults of the same kind, out of pure good-nature resolved to spirit him up, at least to some show of resentment, intending to make up their matter afterwards in as honorable a manner as he could for the poor patient. He represented to him very warmly that no gentleman could take a box on the ear. Sir John answered with great calmness, "I know that; but this was not a box on the ear, it was only a slap of the face."

I was as well acquainted with his two first wives as the difference of our ages permitted. I fancy they have broke their hearts by being chained to such a companion. 'T is really terrible for a well-bred, virtuous young woman to be confined to the conversation of the object of their contempt. There is but one thing to be done in that case, which is a method I am sure you have observed practised with success by some ladies I need not name, — they associate the husband and the lap-dog, and manage so well that they make exactly the same figure in the family. My Lord and Dell tag after madam to all indifferent places, and stay at home together whenever she goes into company where they would be troublesome. I

pity — if the D. of K. [Duke of Kingston] marries. She will then know that her mean compliances will appear as despicable to him as they do now to other people. Who would have thought that all her nice notions and pious meditations would end in being the humble companion of M. [Mademoiselle] de la Touche? I do not doubt she has been forced to it by necessity, and is one proof (amongst many I have seen) of what I always thought, — that nobody should trust their virtue with necessity, the force of which is never known till it is felt, and it is therefore one of the first duties to avoid the temptation of it. I am not pleading for avarice, far from it. I can assure you I equally contemn — who can forget she was born a gentlewoman, for the sake of money she did not want. That is indeed the only sentiment that properly deserves the name of avarice. A prudential care of one's affairs, or (to go further) a desire of being in circumstances to be useful to one's friends, is not only excusable but highly laudable, never blamed but by those who would persuade others to throw away their money, in hopes to pick up a share of it. The greatest declaimers for disinterestedness I ever knew have been capable of the vilest actions on the least view of profit; and the greatest instances of true generosity, given by those who were regular in their expenses and superior to the vanities in fashion.

I believe you are heartily tired of my dull moralities. I confess I am in very low spirits; it is hotter weather than has been known for some years, and I have got an abominable cold, which has drawn after

it a troop of complaints I will not trouble you with reciting. I hope all your family are in good health. I am humble servant to Lord Bute. I give my blessing to my G[rand]children, and am ever your most affectionate mother.

LXXXIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 2, N. S. [1751].

DEAR CHILD, — I had the happiness of a letter from your father last post, by which I find you are in good health, though I have not heard from you of a long time. This frequent interruption of our correspondence is a great uneasiness to me ; I charge it on the neglect or irregularity of the post. I sent you a letter by Mr. Anderson a great while ago, to which I never had any answer ; neither have I ever heard from him since, though I am fully persuaded he has wrote concerning some little commissions I gave him. I should be very sorry he thought I neglected to thank him for his civilities. I desire Lord Bute would inquire about him. I saw him in company with a very pretty pupil, who seemed to me a promising youth. I wish he would fall in love with my granddaughter. I dare say you laugh at this early design of providing for her ; take it as a mark of my affection for you and yours, which is without any mixture of self-interest, since with my age and infirmities there is little probability of my living to see them established. I no more expect

to arrive at the age of the Duchess of Marlborough than to that of Methusalem; neither do I desire it. I have long thought myself useless to the world. I have seen one generation pass away; and it is gone; for I think there are very few of those left that flourished in my youth. You will perhaps call these melancholy reflections; they are not so. There is a quiet after the abandoning of pursuits, something like the rest that follows a laborious day. I tell you this for your comfort. It was formerly a terrifying view to me that I should one day be an old woman. I now find that Nature has provided pleasures for every state. Those are only unhappy who will not be contented with what she gives, but strive to break through her laws, by affecting a perpetuity of youth, which appears to me as little desirable at present as the babies do to you that were the delight of your infancy. I am at the end of my paper, which shortens the sermon of, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

XC.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

May 24, N. S. [1751].

I CAN no longer resist the desire I have to know what is become of my son. I have long suppressed it, from a belief that if there was anything of good to be told, you would not fail to give me the pleasure of hearing it. I find it now grows so much

upon me that whatever I am to know, I think it would be easier for me to support than the anxiety I suffer from my doubts. I beg to be informed, and prepare myself for the worst, with all the philosophy I have. At my time of life I ought to be detached from a world which I am soon to leave; to be totally so is a vain endeavor, and perhaps there is vanity in the endeavor; while we are human we must submit to human infirmities, and suffer them in mind as well as body. All that reflection and experience can do is to mitigate, we can never extinguish, our passions. I call by that name every sentiment that is not founded upon reason, and own I cannot justify to mine the concern I feel for one who never gave me any view of satisfaction.

This is too melancholy a subject to dwell upon. You compliment me on the continuation of my spirits: 't is true I try to maintain them by every art I can, being sensible of the terrible consequences of losing them. Young people are too apt to let theirs sink on any disappointment. I have wrote to my daughter all the considerations I could think of to lessen her affliction. I am persuaded you will advise her to amusements, and am very glad you continue that of travelling, as the most useful for health. I have been prisoner here some months, by the weather; the rivers are still impassable in most places. When they are abated, I intend some little excursions, being of your opinion that exercise is as necessary as food, though I have at present no considerable complaint; my hearing, and I think

my memory, are without any decay, and my sight better than I could expect; it still serves me to read many hours in a day. I have appetite enough to relish what I eat, and have the same sound, uninterrupted sleep that has continued through the course of my life, and to which I attribute the happiness of not yet knowing the headache. I am very sorry you are so often troubled with it, but hope from your care and temperance that if you cannot wholly overcome it, yet it may be so far diminished as not to give you any uneasiness, or affect your constitution.

. . . . . .

XCI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

June 19, N. S. [1751].

My dear Child, — I received yesterday yours of May 10, in which was enclosed the captain's bill for the box. I am much obliged to Lord Bute for thinking of me so kindly; to say truth, I am as fond of baubles as ever, and am so far from being ashamed of it, it is a taste I endeavor to keep up with all the art I am mistress of. I should have despised them at twenty for the same reason that I would not eat tarts or cheesecakes at twelve years old, as being too childish for one capable of more solid pleasures. I now know (and alas! have long known) all things in this world are almost equally trifling, and our most secret projects have scarce

more foundation than those edifices that your little ones raise in cards. You see to what period the vast fortunes of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and Sir Robert Walpole, are soon arrived. I believe as you do, that Lady Orford is a joyful widow, but am persuaded she has as much reason to weep for her husband as ever any woman has had, from Andromache to this day. I never saw any second marriage that did not appear to me very ridiculous; hers is accompanied with circumstances that render the folly complete.

Sicknesses have been very fatal in this country as well as England. I should be glad to know the names of those you say are deceased; I believe I am ignorant of half of them, the Dutch news being forbid here. I would not have you give yourself the trouble, but order one of your servants to transcribe the catalogue. You will perhaps laugh at this curiosity. If you ever return to Bute, you will find that what happens in the world is a considerable amusement in solitude. The people I see here make no more impression on my mind than the figures in the tapestry, — while they are directly before my eyes, I know one is clothed in blue, and another in red; but out of sight, they are so entirely out of memory; I hardly remember whether they are tall or short. I sometimes call myself to account for this insensibility, which has something of ingratitude in it, this little town thinking themselves highly honored and obliged by my residence, they intended me an extraordinary mark of it, having determined to set up my statue in the most con-

spicuous place. The marble was bespoke, and the sculptor bargained with, before I knew anything of the matter; and it would have been erected without my knowledge if it had not been necessary for him to see me to take the resemblance. I thanked him very much for his intention; but utterly refused complying with it, fearing it would be reported (at least in England) that I had set up my own statue. They were so obstinate in the design, I was forced to tell them my religion would not permit it. I seriously believe it would have been worshipped, when I was forgotten, under the name of some saint or other, since I was to have been represented with a book in my hand, which would have passed for a proof of canonisation. This compliment was certainly founded on reasons not unlike those that first framed goddesses, — I mean being useful to them, in which I am second to Ceres. If it be true she taught the art of sowing wheat, it is sure I have learned them to make bread, in which they continued in the same ignorance Mision complains of (as you may see in his letter from Padua). I have introduced French rolls, custards, minced pies, and plum-pudding, which they are very fond of. 'T is impossible to bring them to conform to sillabub, which is so unnatural a mixture in their eyes, they are even shocked to see me eat it; but I expect immortality from the science of butter-making, in which they are become so skilful from my instructions, I can assure you here is as good as in any part of Great Britain. I am afraid I have bragged of this before; but when you do not answer any

part of my letters, I suppose them lost, which exposes you to some repetitions. Have you received that I wrote on my first notice of the prince's death? I shall receive Lord Bute's china with great pleasure. The pearl necklace for my goddaughter has been long packed up for her; I wish I could say sent. In the mean time give her and the rest of yours my blessing, with thanks and compliments to Lord Bute, from your most affectionate mother.

I desire you would order the china to be packed up by some skilful man of the trade, or I shall receive it in pieces.

XCII.

TO MR. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

June 20, N. S. [1751].

I RECEIVED yours of May 9 yesterday, with great satisfaction, finding in it an amendment of your health. I am not surprised at Lady Orford's folly,[1] having known her at Florence; she made great court to me. She has parts, and a very engaging manner. Her company would have amused me very much, but I durst not indulge myself in it, her character being in universal horror. I do not mean from her gallantries, which nobody trouble their heads with, but she had a collection of freethinkers that met weekly at her house, to the scandal of all good Christians. She invited me to one of those honorable assemblies, which I civilly re-

[1] She married Mr. Shirley; see next letter (XCIII).

fused, not desiring to be thought of her opinion, nor thinking it right to make a jest of ordinances that are (at least) so far sacred, as they are absolutely necessary in all civilized governments; and it is being in every sense an enemy to mankind to endeavor to overthrow them. Tarwater is arrived in Italy. I have been asked several questions concerning the use of it in England. I do not find it makes any great progress here; the doctors confine it to a possibility of being useful in the case of inward ulcers, and allow it no further merit. . . . I have wrote a long letter to my daughter this post; I cannot help fearing for her. Time and distance have increased, and not diminished, my tenderness for her. I own it is stronger than my philosophy; my reason agrees with Atticus, but my passions are the same with Tully's.

XCIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[*Feb.* 16, N. S. 1752.]

DEAR CHILD, — I received yesterday, February 15, N. S., the case of books you were so good to send to me; the entertainment they have already given me has recompensed me for the long time I expected them. I began by your direction with Peregrine Pickle. I think Lady V. [Vane]'s Memoirs contain more truth and less malice than any I ever read in my life. When she speaks of her own being disinterested, I am apt to believe she really

thinks herself so, as many highwaymen, after having no possibility of retrieving the character of honesty, please themselves with that of being generous, because, whatever they get on the road, they always spend at the next alehouse, and are still as beggarly as ever. Her history, rightly considered, would be more instructive to young women than any sermon I know. They may see there what mortifications and variety of misery are the unavoidable consequences of gallantries. I think there is no rational creature that would not prefer the life of the strictest Carmelite to the round of hurry and misfortune she has gone through. Her style is clear and concise, with some strokes of humor, which appear to me so much above her. I can't help being of opinion the whole has been modelled by the author of the book in which it is inserted, who is some subaltern admirer of hers. I may judge wrong, she being no acquaintance of mine, though she has married two of my relations. Her first wedding was attended with circumstances that made me think a visit not at all necessary, though I disobliged Lady Susan by neglecting it; and her second, which happened soon after, made her so near a neighbor, that I rather chose to stay the whole summer in town than partake of her balls and parties of pleasure, to which I did not think it proper to introduce you; and had no other way of avoiding it without incurring the censure of a most unnatural mother for denying you diversions that the pious Lady Ferrers permitted to her exemplary daughters. Mr. Shirley has had uncommon fortune in making the conquest

of two such extraordinary ladies, equal in their heroic contempt of shame, and eminent above their sex, the one for beauty, and the other wealth, both which attract the pursuit of all mankind, and have been thrown into his arms with the same unlimited fondness. He appeared to me gentile, well bred, well shaped, and sensible; but the charms of his face and eyes, which Lady V. [Vane] describes with so much warmth, were, I confess, always invisible to me, and the artificial part of his character very glaring, which I think her story shows in a strong light.

. . . . . .

Candles came; and my eyes grown weary, I took up the next book, merely because I supposed from the title it could not engage me long. It was Pompey the Little, which has really diverted me more than any of the others, and it was impossible to go to bed till it was finished. It was a real and exact representation of life, as it is now acted in London, as it was in my time, and as it will be (I do not doubt) a hundred years hence, with some little variation of dress, and perhaps government. I found there many of my acquaintance. Lady T. and Lady O. are so well painted, I fancied I heard them talk, and have heard them say the very things there repeated. I also saw myself as I now am in the character of Mrs. Qualmsick. You will be surprised at this, no Englishwoman being so free from vapors, having never in my life complained of low spirits or weak nerves; but our resemblance is very strong in the fancied loss of appetite which I

have been silly enough to be persuaded into by the physician of this place. He visits me frequently, as being one of the most considerable men in the parish, and is a grave, sober-thinking, great fool, whose solemn appearance, and deliberate way of delivering his sentiments, gives them an air of good sense, though they are often the most injudicious that ever were pronounced. By perpetual telling me I eat so little he is amazed I am able to subsist, he had brought me to be of his opinion; and I began to be seriously uneasy at it. This useful treatise has roused me into a recollection of what I eat yesterday, and do almost every day the same. (I wake generally about seven, and drink half a pint of warm ass's milk, after which I sleep two hours; as soon as I am risen, I constantly take three cups of milk coffee, and two hours after that a large cup of milk chocolate: two hours more brings my dinner, where I never fail swallowing a good dish (I don't mean plate) of gravy soup, with all the bread, roots, etc. belonging to it. I then eat a wing and the whole body of a large fat capon, and a veal sweetbread, concluding with a competent quantity of custard, and some roasted chestnuts. At five in the afternoon I take another dose of ass's milk; and for supper twelve chestnuts (which would weigh twenty-four of those in London), one new-laid egg, and a handsome porringer of white bread and milk. With this diet, notwithstanding the menaces of my wise doctor, I am now convinced I am in no danger of starving) and am obliged to Little Pompey for this discovery.

. . . . . .

My blessing to our children, and compliments to Lord Bute. I enclose a bill to pay the overplus due to you, and serve for future little commissions.

XCIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Jan. 28, N. S. [1753].

Dear Child, — You have given me a great deal of satisfaction by your account of your eldest daughter. I am particularly pleased to hear she is a good arithmetician; it is the best proof of understanding, — the knowledge of numbers is one of the chief distinctions between us and the brutes. If there is anything in blood you may reasonably expect your children should be endowed with an uncommon share of good sense. Mr. Wortley's family and mine have both produced some of the greatest men that have been born in England; I mean Admiral Sandwich and my grandfather, who was distinguished by the name of Wise William. I have heard Lord Bute's father mentioned as an extraordinary genius, though he had not many opportunities of showing it; and his uncle, the present Duke of Argyll, has one of the best heads I ever knew. I will therefore speak to you as supposing Lady Mary not only capable but desirous of learning; in that case by all means let her be indulged in it. You will tell me I did not make it a part of your education. Your prospect was very different from hers; as you had no defect either in mind or person to hinder, and much

in your circumstances to attract, the highest offers, it seemed your business to learn how to live in the world, as it is hers to know how to be easy out of it. It is the common error of builders and parents to follow some plan they think beautiful (and perhaps is so), without considering that nothing is beautiful that is displaced. Hence we see so many edifices raised that the raisers can never inhabit, being too large for their fortunes. Vistas are laid open over barren heaths, and apartments contrived for a coolness very agreeable in Italy, but killing in the north of Britain; thus every woman endeavors to breed her daughter a fine lady, qualifying her for a station in which she will never appear, and at the same time incapacitating her for that retirement to which she is destined. Learning, if she has a real taste for it, will not only make her contented, but happy in it. No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions, nor regret the loss of expensive diversions or variety of company, if she can be amused with an author in her closet. To render this amusement extensive, she should be permitted to learn the languages. True knowledge consists in knowing things, not words. I would wish her no further a linguist than to enable her to read books in their originals that are often corrupted and always injured by translations. Two hours' application every morning will bring this about much sooner than you can imagine, and she will have leisure enough besides to run over the English poetry, which is a more important part of a woman's education than it is generally supposed.

Many a young damsel has been ruined by a fine copy of verses which she would have laughed at if she had known it had been stolen from Mr. Waller. I remember, when I was a girl, I saved one of my companions from destruction who communicated to me an epistle she was quite charmed with. As she had a natural good taste, she observed the lines were not so smooth as Prior's or Pope's, but had more thought and spirit than any of theirs. She was wonderfully delighted with such a demonstration of her lover's sense and passion, and not a little pleased with her own charms that had force enough to inspire such elegancies. In the midst of this triumph I showed her that they were taken from Randolph's poems, and the unfortunate transcriber was dismissed with the scorn he deserved.

. . . . . .

You should encourage your daughter to talk over with you what she reads; and as you are very capable of distinguishing, take care she does not mistake pert folly for wit and humor, or rhyme for poetry, which are the common errors of young people, and have a train of ill consequences. The second caution to be given her (and which is most absolutely necessary) is to conceal whatever learning she attains with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness; the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of all her acquaintance.

. . . . . .

You will tell me I have not observed this rule myself; but you are mistaken, — it is only inevitable accident that has given me any reputation that way. I have always carefully avoided it, and ever thought it a misfortune.

. . . . . .

Do not fear that this should make her affect the character of Lady ——, or Lady ——, or Mrs. ——; those women are ridiculous, not because they have learning, but because they have it not. One thinks herself a complete historian after reading Echard's Roman History; another a profound philosopher, having got by heart some of Pope's unintelligible essays; and a third an able divine, on the strength of Whitefield's sermons, — thus you hear them screaming politics and controversy.

It is a saying of Thucydides, "Ignorance is bold, and knowledge reserved." Indeed, it is impossible to be far advanced in it without being more humbled by a conviction of human ignorance than elated by learning. At the same time I recommend books, I neither exclude work nor drawing. I think it as scandalous for a woman not to know how to use a needle as for a man not to know how to use a sword. I was once extreme fond of my pencil, and it was a great mortification to me when my father turned off my master, having made a considerable progress for a short time I learnt. My over-eagerness in the pursuit of it had brought a weakness on my eyes that made it necessary to leave it off, and all the advantage I got was the improvement of my hand. I see by hers that practice will make her a ready writer;

she may attain it by serving you for a secretary when your health or affairs make it troublesome to you to write yourself, and custom will make it an agreeable amusement to her. She cannot have too many for that station of life which will probably be her fate. The ultimate end of your education was to make you a good wife (and I have the comfort to hear that you are one) ; hers ought to be to make her happy in a virgin state. I will not say it is happier, but it is undoubtedly safer than any marriage. In a lottery where there are (at the lowest computation) ten thousand blanks to a prize, it is the most prudent choice not to venture. I have always been so thoroughly persuaded of this truth that notwithstanding the flattering views I had for you (as I never intended you a sacrifice to my vanity), I thought I owed you the justice to lay before you all the hazards attending matrimony ; you may recollect I did so in the strongest manner. Perhaps you may have more success in the instructing your daughter ; she has so much company at home she will not need seeking it abroad, and will more readily take the notions you think fit to give her. As you were alone in my family, it would have been thought a great cruelty to suffer you no companions of your own age, especially having so many near relations ; and I do not wonder their opinions influenced yours. I was not sorry to see you not determined on a single life, knowing it was not your father's intention, and contented myself with endeavoring to make your home so easy that you might not be in haste to leave it.

I am afraid you will think this a very long and insignificant letter. I hope the kindness of the design will excuse it, being willing to give you every proof in my power that I am

Your most affectionate mother.

XCV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 6 [1753].

I CANNOT help writing a sort of apology for my last letter, foreseeing that you will think it wrong, or at least Lord Bute will be extremely shocked at the proposal of a learned education for daughters, which the generality of men believe as great a profanation as the clergy would do if the laity should presume to exercise the functions of the priesthood. I desire you would take notice, I would not have learning enjoined them as a task, but permitted as a pleasure if their genius leads them naturally to it. I look upon my granddaughters as a sort of lay nuns; destiny may have laid up other things for them, but they have no reason to expect to pass their time otherwise than their aunts do at present; and I know by experience it is in the power of study not only to make solitude tolerable, but agreeable. I have now lived almost seven years in a stricter retirement than yours in the Isle of Bute, and can assure you I have never had half an hour heavy on my hands for want of something to do. Whoever will cultivate their own mind will find full

employment. Every virtue does not only require great care in the planting, but as much daily solicitude in cherishing, as exotic fruits and flowers. The vices and passions, which I am afraid are the natural product of the soil, demand perpetual weeding. Add to this the search after knowledge (every branch of which is entertaining), and the longest life is too short for the pursuit of it; which though in some regards confined to very strait limits, leaves still a vast variety of amusements to those capable of tasting them, which is utterly impossible for those that are blinded by prejudices which are the certain effect of an ignorant education. My own was one of the worst in the world, being exactly the same as Clarissa Harlowe's, — her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling my governess, who had been nurse to my mother, I could almost fancy the author was acquainted with her. She took so much pains from my infancy to fill my head with superstitious tales and false notions, it was none of her fault I am not at this day afraid of witches and hobgoblins, or turned Methodist. Almost all girls are bred after this manner. I believe you are the only woman (perhaps I might say person) that never was either frighted or cheated into anything by your parents. I can truly affirm I never deceived anybody in my life, excepting (which I confess has often happened undesignedly) by speaking plainly. As Earl Stanhope used to say, during his ministry he always imposed on the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth, which, as they thought impossible to come from the mouth of a statesman, they never

failed to write informations to their respective courts directly contrary to the assurances he gave them, — most people confounding the ideas of sense and cunning, though there are really no two things in nature more opposite; it is in part from this false reasoning, the unjust custom prevails of debarring our sex from the advantages of learning, the men fancying the improvement of our understandings would only furnish us with more art to deceive them, which is directly contrary to the truth. Fools are always enterprising, not seeing the difficulties of deceit, or the ill consequences of detection. I could give many examples of ladies whose ill conduct has been very notorious, which has been owing to that ignorance which has exposed them to idleness, which is justly called the mother of mischief. There is nothing so like the education of a woman of quality as that of a prince; they are taught to dance, and the exterior part of what is called good breeding, which if they attain, they are extraordinary creatures in their kind, and have all the accomplishments required by their directors. The same characters are formed by the same lessons, which inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other animals, where we see no distinction of capacity, though I am persuaded if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as Doctor Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them that a mare could not be taught to pace.

. . . . . .

If you follow my advice in relation to Lady Mary, my correspondence may be of use to her; and I shall very willingly give her those instructions that may be necessary in the pursuit of her studies. Before her age I was in the most regular commerce with my grandmother, though the difference of our time of life was much greater, she being past forty-five when she married my grandfather. She died at ninety-six, retaining to the last the vivacity and clearness of her understanding, which was very uncommon. You cannot remember her, being then in your nurse's arms. I conclude with repeating to you, I only recommend, but am far from commanding, which I think I have no right to do. I tell you my sentiments, because you desired to know them, and hope you will receive them with some partiality, as coming from

Your most affectionate mother.

XCVI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

VENICE, *March* 16, N. S., 1753.

DEAR CHILD, — I received yours of December 20 this morning, which gave me great pleasure, by the account of your good health, and that of your father. I know nothing else could give me any at present, being sincerely afflicted for the death of the Doge. He is lamented here by all ranks of people as their common parent. He really answered the idea of Lord Bolingbroke's imaginary Patriot Prince, and

was the only example I ever knew of having passed through the greatest employments and most important negotiations without ever making an enemy. When I was at Venice, which was some months before his election, he was the leading voice in the senate, and possessed of so strong a popularity as would have been dangerous in the hands of a bad man; yet he had the art to silence envy, and I never once heard an objection to his character, or even an insinuation to his disadvantage. I attribute this peculiar happiness to be owing to the sincere benevolence of his heart, joined with an easy cheerfulness of temper which made him agreeable to all companies, and a blessing to all his dependents.

. . . . . .

This is only speaking of him in the public light. As to myself, he always professed and gave me every demonstration of the most cordial friendship. Indeed I received every good office from him I could have expected from a tender father or a kind brother; and though I have not seen him since my last return to Italy, he never omitted an opportunity of expressing the greatest regard for me, both in his discourse to others and upon all occasions where he thought he could be useful to me. I do not doubt I shall very sensibly miss the influence of his good intentions.

You will think I dwell too long on this melancholy subject. I will turn to one widely different, in taking notice of the dress of you London ladies, who, I find, take up the Italian fashion of going in your hair; it is here only the custom of the peasants and

the unmarried women of quality, excepting in the heat of summer, when any nightcap would be almost insupportable. I have often smiled to myself in viewing our assemblies (which they call conversations at Lovere), the gentlemen being all in light nightcaps and nightgowns and slippers, and the ladies in their stays and smock-sleeves tied with ribands, and a single lutestring petticoat; there is not a hat or a hoop to be seen. It is true this dress is called *vestimenti di confidenza*, and they do not appear in it in town, but in their own chambers, and that only during the summer months.

My paper admonishes me to conclude, by assuring you that I am ever

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to my G. [grand]children. You will send me Lord Orrery and Lord Bolingbroke's books.

XCVII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Oct. 10, 1753.

This letter will be very dull or very peevish, perhaps both. I am at present much out of humor, being on the edge of a quarrel with my friend and patron, the C.[1] He is really a good-natured and generous man, and spends his vast revenue in what

[1] Cardinal Querini.

he thinks the service of his country, besides contributing largely to the building of a new cathedral, which when finished will stand in the rank of fine churches (where he has already the comfort of seeing his own busto), finely done both within and without. He has founded a magnificent college for one hundred scholars, which I don't doubt he will endow very nobly, and greatly enlarged and embellished his episcopal palace. He has joined to it a public library, which, when I saw it, was a very beautiful room; it is now finished and furnished, and open twice in a week with proper attendance. Yesterday here arrived one of his chief chaplains, with a long compliment, which concluded with desiring I would send him my works; having dedicated one of his cases to English books, he intended my labors should appear in the most conspicuous place. I was struck dumb for some time with this astonishing request; when I recovered my vexatious surprise (foreseeing the consequence), I made answer, I was highly sensible of the honor designed me, but upon my word I had never printed a single line in my life. I was answered in a cold tone, his Eminence could send for them to England, but they would be a long time coming, and with some hazard; and that he had flattered himself I would not refuse him such a favor, and I need not be ashamed of seeing my name in a collection where he admitted none but the most eminent authors. It was to no purpose to endeavor to convince him. He would not stay dinner, though earnestly invited; and went away with the air of

one that thought he had reason to be offended. I know his master will have the same sentiments, and I shall pass in his opinion for a monster of ingratitude, while it is the blackest of vices in my opinion, and of which I am utterly incapable. I really could cry for vexation.

Sure nobody ever had such various provocations to print as myself. I have seen things I have wrote, so mangled and falsified, I have scarce known them. I have seen poems I never read published with my name at length; and others, that were truly and singly wrote by me, printed under the names of others. I have made myself easy under all these mortifications by the reflection I did not deserve them, having never aimed at the vanity of popular applause; but I own my philosophy is not proof against losing a friend, and it may be making an enemy of one to whom I am obliged.

I confess I have often been complimented, since I have been in Italy, on the books I have given the public. I used at first to deny it with some warmth; but finding I persuaded nobody, I have of late contented myself with laughing whenever I heard it mentioned, knowing the character of a learned woman is far from being ridiculous in this country, — the greatest families being proud of having produced female writers, and a Milanese lady being now professor of mathematics in the University of Bologna, invited thither by a most obliging letter, wrote by the present Pope, who desired her to accept of the chair, not as a recompense for her merit, but to do honor to a town which is under his pro-

tection. To say truth, there is no part of the world where our sex is treated with so much contempt as in England. I do not complain of men for having engrossed the government; in excluding us from all degrees of power, they preserve us from many fatigues, many dangers, and perhaps many crimes. The small proportion of authority that has fallen to my share (only over a few children and servants) has always been a burden, and never a pleasure; and I believe every one finds it so who acts from a maxim (I think an indispensable duty) that whoever is under my power is under my protection. Those who find a joy in inflicting hardships and seeing objects of misery, may have other sensations; but I have always thought corrections, even when necessary, as painful to the giver as to the sufferer, and am therefore very well satisfied with the state of subjection we are placed in; but I think it the highest injustice to be debarred the entertainment of my closet, and that the same studies which raise the character of a man should hurt that of a woman. We are educated in the grossest ignorance, and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason; if some few get above their nurses' instructions, our knowledge must rest concealed, and be as useless to the world as gold in the mine. I am now speaking according to our English notions, which may wear out, some ages hence, along with others equally absurd. It appears to me the strongest proof of a clear understanding in Longinus, in every light acknowledged one of the greatest men among the ancients, when I find him so far superior to vulgar prejudices as to choose his

two examples of fine writing from a Jew (at that time the most despised people upon earth) and a woman. Our modern wits would be so far from quoting, they would scarce own they had read the works of such contemptible creatures though, perhaps they would condescend to steal from them, at the same time they declared they were below their notice. This subject is apt to run away with me; I will trouble you with no more of it.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours, which are truly dear to

Your most affectionate mother.

XCVIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 1, N. S.

Dear Child, — I have now finished your books, and I believe you will think I have made quick despatch. To say truth, I have read night and day. . . . I was such an old fool as to weep over Clarissa Harlowe, like any milkmaid of sixteen over the ballad of the Lady's Fall. To say truth, the first volume softened me by a near resemblance of my maiden days; but on the whole 't is most miserable stuff. Miss How, who is called a young lady of sense and honor, is not only extreme silly, but a more vicious character than Sally Martin, whose crimes are owing at first to seduction, and afterwards to necessity; while this virtuous damsel, without any reason, insults her mother at home and

ridicules her abroad, abuses the man she marries, and is impertinent and impudent with great applause. Even that model of affection, Clarissa, is so faulty in her behavior as to deserve little compassion. Any girl that runs away with a young fellow without intending to marry him, should be carried to Bridewell or to Bedlam the next day. Yet the circumstances are so laid as to inspire tenderness, notwithstanding the low style and absurd incidents; and I look upon this and Pamela to be two books that will do more general mischief than the works of Lord Rochester. There is something humorous in R. Random that makes me believe that the author is H. Fielding. . . . I fancy you now saying, "'T is a sad thing to grow old; what does my poor mamma mean by troubling me with criticisms on books that nobody but herself will ever read?" You must allow something to my solitude. I have a pleasure in writing to my dear child, and not many subjects to write upon. The adventures of people here would not at all amuse you, having no acquaintance with the persons concerned; and an account of myself would hardly gain credit, after having fairly owned to you how deplorably I was misled in regard to my own health; though I have all my life been on my guard against the information by the sense of hearing, — it being one of my earliest observations, the universal inclination of human-kind is to be led by the ears; and I am sometimes apt to imagine that they are given to men, as they are to pitchers, purposely that they may be carried about by them.

This consideration should abate my wonder to see, as I do here, the most astonishing legends embraced as the most sacred truths, by those who have always heard them asserted and never contradicted; they even place a merit in complying in direct opposition to the evidence of all their other senses.

I am very much pleased with the account you give me of your father's health. I hope your own and that of your family is perfect; give my blessing to your little ones, and my compliments to Lord Bute, and think me ever

Your most affectionate mother.

XCIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

July 20, N. S. [1754.]

My dear Child, — I have now read over the books you were so good to send, and intend to say something of them all, though some are not worth speaking of. I shall begin in respect to his dignity, with Lord B. [Bolingbroke], who is a glaring proof how far vanity can blind a man, and how easy it is to varnish over to one's self the most criminal conduct. He declares he always loved his country, though he confesses he endeavored to betray her to popery and slavery; and loved his friends, though he abandoned them in distress, with all the blackest circumstances of treachery. His account of the Peace of Utrecht is almost equally unfair or partial: I shall allow that perhaps the views of the Whigs at that time were too vast,

and the nation, dazzled by military glory, had hopes too sanguine; but sure the same terms that the French consented to, at the treaty of Gertruydenberg might have been obtained; or if the displacing of the Duke of Marlborough raised the spirits of our enemies to a degree of refusing what they had before offered, how can he excuse the guilt of removing him from the head of a victorious army and exposing us to submit to any articles of peace, being unable to continue the war? I agree with him that the idea of conquering France is a wild, extravagant notion, and would if possible be impolitic; but she might have been reduced to such a state as would have rendered her incapable of being terrible to her neighbors for some ages; nor should we have been obliged, as we have done almost ever since, to bribe the French ministers to let us live in quiet. So much for his political reasonings, which I confess are delivered in a florid, easy style; but I cannot be of Lord Orrery's opinion, that he is one of the best English writers. Well-turned periods or smooth lines are not the perfection either of prose or verse; they may serve to adorn, but can never stand in the place of good sense. Copiousness of words however ranged is always false eloquence, though it will ever impose on some sort of understandings. How many readers and admirers has Madame de Sévigné, who only gives us in a lively manner and fashionable phrases mean sentiments, vulgar prejudices, and endless repetitions, — sometimes the tittle-tattle of a fine lady, sometimes that of an old nurse, always tittle-tattle; yet so well gilt over by airy expressions and

a flowing style, she will always please the same people to whom Lord Bolingbroke will shine as a first-rate author. She is so far to be excused, as her letters were not intended for the press; while he labors to display to posterity all the wit and learning he is master of, and sometimes spoils a good argument by a profusion of words, running out into several pages a thought that might have been more clearly expressed in a few lines; and what is worse, often falls into contradiction and repetitions, which are almost unavoidable to all voluminous writers, and can only be forgiven to those retailers whose necessity compels them to diurnal scribbling, who load their meaning with epithets, and run into digressions because (in the jockey phrase) it rids the ground, that is, covers a certain quantity of paper to answer the demand of the day. A great part of Lord B.'s letters are designed to show his reading, which indeed, appears to have been very extensive; but I cannot perceive that such a minute account of it can be of any use to the pupil he pretends to instruct; nor can I help thinking he is far below either Tillotson or Addison, even in style, though the latter was sometimes more diffuse than his judgment approved, to furnish out the length of a daily Spectator. I own I have small regard for Lord B. as an author, and the highest contempt for him as a man.

. . . . . .

C.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

LOVERE, *July* [*August ?*] 23 [1755].

MY DEAR CHILD, — I have promised you some remarks on all the books I have received. I believe you would easily forgive my not keeping my word; however, I shall go on. The Rambler is certainly a strong misnomer; he always plods in the beaten road of his predecessors, following the Spectator (with the same pace a pack-horse would do a hunter) in the style that is proper to lengthen a paper. These writers may, perhaps, be of service to the public, which is saying a great deal in their favor. There are numbers of both sexes who never read anything but such productions, and cannot spare time from doing nothing to go through a sixpenny pamphlet. Such gentle readers may be improved by a moral hint which, though repeated over and over from generation to generation, they never heard in their lives. I should be glad to know the name of this laborious author.[1] H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted; and I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are real matters of fact. I wonder he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth are sorry scoundrels. All these sort of books have the same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit

[1] Johnson's name as editor did not appear until much later.

in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they choose to plunge themselves into expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much out of nature as fairy treasures. Fielding has really a fund of true humor, and was to be pitied at his first entrance into the world, having no choice, as he said himself, but to be a hackney writer or a hackney coachman. His genius deserved a better fate; but I cannot help blaming that continued indiscretion, to give it the softest name, that has run through his life, and I am afraid still remains. . . . The general want of invention which reigns among our writers inclines me to think it is not the natural growth of our island, which has not sun enough to warm the imagination. The press is loaded by the servile flock of imitators. Lord B. [Bolingbroke] would have quoted Horace in this place. Since I was born, no original has appeared excepting Congreve, and Fielding, who would, I believe, have approached nearer to his excellences if not forced by necessity to publish without correction, and throw many productions into the world he would have thrown into the fire if meat could have been got without money, or money without scribbling. The greatest virtue, justice, and the most distinguishing prerogative of mankind, writing, when duly executed, do honor to human nature; but when degenerated into trades, are the most contemptible ways of getting bread. I am sorry not to see any more of Peregrine Pickle's performances; I wish you would tell me his name.

I can't forbear saying something in relation to my granddaughters, who are very near my heart. If any of them are fond of reading, I would not advise you to hinder them (chiefly because it is impossible) seeing poetry, plays, or romances; but accustom them to talk over what they read, and point [out] to them, as you are very capable of doing, the absurdity often concealed under fine expressions, where the sound is apt to engage the admiration of young people. . . . I fear this counsel has been repeated to you before; but I have lost so many letters designed for you, I know not which you have received. If you would have me avoid this fault, you must take notice of those that arrive, which you very seldom do. My dear child, God bless you and yours. I am ever your most affectionate mother.

CI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

LOVERE, *Sept.* 22, 1755.

MY DEAR CHILD, — I received, two days ago, the box of books you were so kind to send; but I can scarce say whether my pleasure or disappointment was greatest. I was much pleased to see before me a fund of amusement, but heartily vexed to find your letter consisting only of three lines and a half. Why will you not employ Lady Mary as secretary, if it is troublesome to you to write? I have told you over and over, you may at the same time oblige your

mother and improve your daughter, both which I should think very agreeable to yourself. You can never want something to say. The history of your nursery, if you had no other subject to write on, would be very acceptable to me. I am such a stranger to everything in England, I should be glad to hear more particulars relating to the families I am acquainted with.

. . . . . .

I am sorry for H. Fielding's death, not only as I shall read no more of his writings, but I believe he lost more than others, as no man enjoyed life more than he did, though few had less reason to do so, the highest of his preferment being raking in the lowest sinks of vice and misery. . . . His happy constitution (even when he had with great pains half demolished it) made him forget everything when he was before a venison pasty, or over a flask of champagne ; and I am persuaded he has known more happy moments than any prince upon earth. There was a great similitude between his character and that of Sir Richard Steele. He had the advantage both in learning and, in my opinion, genius ; they both agreed in wanting money in spite of all their friends, and would have wanted it if their hereditary lands had been as extensive as their imagination ; yet each of them [was] so formed for happiness, it is pity he was not immortal. I have read the "Cry ;" and if I would write in the style to be admired by good Lord Orrery, I would tell you the "Cry" made me ready to cry, and the "Art of Tormenting" tormented me very much. I

take them to be Sally Fielding's, and also the "Female Quixote;" the plan of that is pretty, but ill executed. The most edifying part of the "Journey to Lisbon," is the history of the kitten; I was the more touched by it, having a few days before found one, in deplorable circumstances, in a neighboring vineyard. I did not only relieve her present wants with some excellent milk, but had her put into a clean basket, and brought to my own house, where she has lived ever since very comfortably.

. . . . . .

This letter is as long and as dull as any of Richardson's. I am ashamed of it, notwithstanding my maternal privilege of being tiresome.

. . . . . .

This Richardson is a strange fellow. I heartily despise him, and eagerly read him, nay, sob over his works in a most scandalous manner. The two first tomes of Clarissa touched me, as being very resembling to my maiden days; and I find in the pictures of Sir Thomas Grandison and his lady what I have heard of my mother and seen of my father.

This letter is grown (I know not how) into an immeasurable length. I answer it to my conscience as a just judgment on you for the shortness of yours. Remember my unalterable maxim, where we love we have always something to say; consequently my pen never tires when expressing to you the thoughts of

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all your dear young ones, even the last comer.

CII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

July 22, N. S. [1754].

When I wrote to you last, my dear child, I told you I had a great cold, which ended in a very bad fever, which continued a fortnight without intermission, and you may imagine has brought me very low. I have not yet left my chamber. My first care is to thank you for yours of May 8.

I have not yet lost all my interest in this country by the death of the Doge, having another very considerable friend, though I cannot expect to keep him long, he being near fourscore. I mean the Cardinal Querini, who is archbishop of this diocese and consequently of great power, there being not one family, high or low, in this province that has not some ecclesiastic in it, and therefore all of them have some dependence on him. He is of one of the first families of Venice, vastly rich of himself, and has many great benefices besides his archbishopric; but these advantages are little in his eyes in comparison of being the first author (as he fancies) at this day in Christendom; and indeed, if the merit of the books consisted in bulk and number, he might very justly claim that character. I believe he has published, yearly, several volumes for above fifty years, besides corresponding with all the *literati* of Europe, and among these several of the senior fellows at Oxford and some members of

the Royal Society that neither you nor I ever heard of, who he is persuaded are the most eminent men in England. He is at present employed in writing his own life, of which he has already printed the first tome; and if he goes on in the same style, it will be a most voluminous performance. He begins from the moment of his birth, and tells us that in that day he made such extraordinary faces, the midwife, chambermaids, and nurses all agreed that there was born a shining light in Church and state. You 'll think me very merry with the failings of my friend. I confess I ought to forgive a vanity to which I am obliged for many good offices, since I do not doubt it is owing to that that he professes himself so highly attached to my service, having an opinion that my suffrage is of great weight in the learned world and that I shall not fail to spread his fame, at least all over Great Britain. He sent me a present last week of a very uncommon kind, even his own picture, extremely well done, but so flattering, it is a young old man, with a most pompous inscription under it. I suppose he intended it for the ornament of my library, not knowing it is only a closet. However, these distinctions he shows me give me a figure in this town, where everybody has something to hope from him; and it was certainly in a view to that they would have complimented me with a statue, for I would not have you mistake so far as to imagine there is any set of people more grateful or generous than another. Mankind is everywhere the same. Like cherries or apples, they may differ in size, shape, or color, from differ-

ent soils, climate, or culture, but are still essentially the same species; and the little black wood-cherry is not nearer akin to the [may-]dukes that are served at great tables than the wild naked negro to the fine figures adorned with coronets and ribbons.

. . . . . .

The conclusion of your letter has touched me very much. I sympathize with you, my dear child, in all the concern you express for your family; you may remember I represented it to you before you was married, but that is one of the sentiments it is impossible to comprehend till it is felt. A mother only knows a mother's fondness. Indeed, the pain so overbalances the pleasure that I believe, if it could be thoroughly understood, there would be no mothers at all. However, take care that your anxiety for the future does not take from you the comforts you may enjoy in the present hour. It is all that is properly ours; and yet such is the weakness of humanity, we commonly lose what is, either by regretting the past or disturbing our minds with the fear of what may be. You have many blessings, — a husband you love and who behaves well to you; agreeable, hopeful children; a handsome, convenient house with pleasant gardens, in a good air and fine situation, — which I place among the most solid satisfactions of life. The truest wisdom is that which diminishes to us what is displeasing and turns our thoughts to the advantages we possess. I can assure you I give no precepts I do not daily practise. How often do I fancy to myself the pleasure I should take in seeing you in the midst of your little

people ; and how severe do I then think my destiny that denies me that happiness ! I endeavor to comfort myself by reflecting that we should certainly have perpetual disputes (if not quarrels) concerning the management of them ; the affection of a grandmother has generally a tincture of dotage ; you would say I spoilt them and perhaps not be much in the wrong. Speaking of them calls to my remembrance the token I have so long promised my goddaughter. I am really ashamed of it : I would have sent it by Mr. Anderson if he had been going immediately to London, but as he proposed a long tour, I durst not press it upon him. It is not easy to find any one who will take the charge of a jewel for a long journey. It may be the value of it in money, to choose something for herself, would be as acceptable ; if so, I will send you a note upon Child. Ceremony should be banished between us. I beg you would speak freely upon that and all other occasions, to

Your most affectionate mother.

CIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

. . . . . .

I RECEIVED the books you were so kind to send me three days ago, but not the china, which I would not venture among the precipices that lead hither. I have only had time to read Lord Orrery's work, which has extremely entertained and not at all sur-

prised me, having the honor of being acquainted with him and know him for one of those danglers after wit, who, like those after beauty, spend their time in humbly admiring and are happy in being permitted to attend, though they are laughed at and only encouraged to gratify the insatiate vanity of those professed wits and beauties who aim at being publicly distinguished in those characters. D. [Dean] S. [Swift], by his lordship's own account, was so intoxicated with the love of flattery, he sought it amongst the lowest of the people and the silliest of women; and was never so well pleased with any companions as those that worshipped him while he insulted them. It is a wonderful condescension in a man of quality to offer his incense in such a crowd and think it an honor to share a friendship with Sheridan, etc., especially being himself endowed with such universal merit as he displays in these letters, where he shows that he is a poet, a patriot, a philosopher, a physician, a critic, a complete scholar, and most excellent moralist, — shining in private life as a submissive son, a tender father, and zealous friend. His only error has been that love of learned ease which he has indulged in, a solitude which has prevented the world from being blest with such a general minister or admiral, being equal to any of these employments, if he would have turned his talents to the use of the public. Heaven be praised! he has now drawn his pen in its service, and given an example to mankind that the most villanous actions, nay, the coarsest nonsense are only small blemishes in a great genius.

I happen to think quite contrary, weak woman as I am.

. . . . . .

There can be no worse picture made of the Doctor's morals than he has given us himself in the letters printed by Pope. We see him vain, trifling, ungrateful to the memory of his patron, the E. [Earl] of Oxford, making a servile court where he had any interested views, and meanly abusive when they were disappointed, and as he says (in his own phrase) flying in the face of mankind in company with his adorer Pope. It is pleasant to consider, that, had it not been for the good-nature of these very mortals they contemn, these two superior beings were entitled, by their birth and hereditary fortune, to be only a couple of link-boys.

CIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 22 [1756].

I HAVE received but this morning the first box of china Lord Bute has been so obliging to send me. I am quite charmed with it, but wish you had sent in it the note of the contents; it has been so long deposited that it is not impossible some diminution may have happened. Everything that comes from England is precious to me, to the very hay that is employed in packing. I should be glad to know anything that would be an agreeable return from hence. There are many things I could send, but

they are either contraband or the custom would cost more than they are worth. I look out for a picture; the few that are in this part of Italy are those that remain in families, where they are entailed, and I might as well pretend to send you a palace. I am extremely pleased with the account you give of your father's health. I have wrote to desire his consent in the disposal of poor Lady Oxford's legacy; I do not doubt obtaining it. It has been both my interest and my duty to study his character, and I can say with truth I never knew any man so capable of a generous action.

A late adventure here makes a great noise from the rank of the people concerned, — the Marchioness Lyscinnia Bentivoglio, who was heiress of one branch of the Martinenghi, and brought forty thousand gold sequins to her husband.

. . . . . .

The Cardinal Bentivoglio, his uncle, thought he could not choose better, though his nephew might certainly have chose among all the Italian ladies, being descended from the sovereigns of Bologna, actually a grandee of Spain, a noble Venetian, and in possession of twenty-five thousand pounds sterling per annum, with immense wealth in palaces, furniture, and absolute dominion in some of his lands. The girl was pretty, and the match was with the satisfaction of both families; but she brought with her such a diabolical temper and such *Luciferan* pride that neither husband, relations, or servants had ever a moment's peace with her. After about eight years' warfare, she eloped one fair

morning and took refuge in Venice, leaving her two daughters, the eldest scarce six years old, to the care of the exasperated marquis. Her father was so angry at her extravagant conduct, he would not for some time receive her into his house; but after some months and much solicitation, parental fondness prevailed, and she remained with him ever since, notwithstanding all the efforts of her husband, who tried kindness, submission, and threats to no purpose. The cardinal came twice to Brescia, her own father joined his entreaties, nay, *his Holiness* wrote a letter with his own hand and made use of the Church authority, but he found it harder to reduce one woman than ten heretics. She was inflexible, and lived ten years in this state of reprobation. Her father died last winter and left her his whole estate for her life, and afterwards to her children. Her eldest was now marriageable and disposed of to the nephew of Cardinal Valentino Gonzagua, first minister at Rome. She would neither appear at the wedding nor take the least notice of a dutiful letter sent by the bride. The old cardinal (who was passionately fond of his illustrious name) was so much touched with the apparent extinction of it that it was thought to have hastened his death. She continued in the enjoyment of her ill-humor, living in great splendor, though almost solitary, having, by some impertinence or other, disgusted all her acquaintance, till about a month ago, when her woman brought her a basin of broth, which she usually drank in her bed. She took a few spoonfuls of it, and then cried out

it was so bad it was impossible to endure it. Her chambermaids were so used to hear her exclamations they had not the worse opinion of it, and eat it up very comfortably; they were both seized with the same pangs and died the next day. She sent for physicians, who judged her poisoned; but as she had taken a small quantity, by the help of antidotes she recovered, yet is still in a languishing condition. Her cook was examined and racked, always protesting entire innocence and swearing he had made the soup in the same manner he was accustomed. You may imagine the noise of this affair. She loudly accused her husband, it being the interest of no other person to wish her out of the world. He resides at Ferrara (about which the greatest part of his lands lie), and was soon informed of this accident. He sent doctors to her, whom she would not see, sent vast alms to all the convents to pray for her health, and ordered a number of masses to be said in every church of Brescia and Ferrara. He sent letters to the Senate at Venice and published manifestoes in all the capital cities, in which he professes his affection to her and abhorrence of any attempt against her, and has a cloud of witnesses that he never gave her the least reason of complaint, and even since her leaving him has always spoke of her with kindness and courted her return. He is said to be remarkably sweet tempered, and has the best character of any man of quality in this country. If the death of her women did not seem to confirm it, her accusation would gain credit with nobody. She is certainly

very sincere in it herself, being so persuaded he has resolved her death that she dare not take the air, apprehending to be assassinated, and has imprisoned herself in her chamber, where she will neither eat nor drink anything that she does not see tasted by all her servants. The physicians now say that perhaps the poison might fall into the broth accidentally; I confess I do not perceive the possibility of it. As to the cook suffering the rack, that is a mere jest where people have money enough to bribe the executioner. I decide nothing; but such is the present destiny of a lady, who would have been one of Richardson's heroines, having never been suspected of the least gallantry, hating and being hated universally, of a most noble spirit, it being proverbial, "As proud as the Marchioness Lyscinnia."

I am afraid I have tired you with my long story; I thought it singular enough to amuse you. I believe your censure will be different from that of the ladies here, who all range themselves in the party of the Marquis Guido. They say he is a handsome man, little past forty, and would easily find a second wife, notwithstanding the suspicion raised on this occasion. Many customs and some laws are as extraordinary here as the situation of the capital.

I would write to Lord Bute to thank him, if I did not think it would be giving him trouble. I have not less gratitude; I desire you would assure him of it, and that I am to you both

Your most affectionate mother.

My blessing to your little ones.

CV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

PADUA, *Dec.* 28, 1756.

MY DEAR CHILD, — I received yours of November 29, with great pleasure, some days before I had the box of books, and am highly delighted with the snuff-box; that manufacture is at present as much in fashion at Venice as at London. In general, all the shops are full of English merchandise, and they boast [of] everything as coming from London, in the same style as they used to do from Paris. I was showed (of their own invention) a set of furniture in a taste entirely new; it consists of eight large armed chairs, the same number of sconces, a table, and prodigious looking-glass, all of glass. It is impossible to imagine their beauty; they deserve being placed in a prince's dressing-room or grand cabinet; the price demanded is four hundred pounds. They would be a very proper decoration for the apartment of a prince so young and beautiful as ours.

The present ministry promises better counsels than have been followed in my time. I am extremely glad to hear the continuation of your father's health, and that you follow his advice. I am really persuaded (without any dash of partiality) no man understands the interest of England better, or has it more at heart. I am obliged to him for whatever he does for you. I will not indulge myself in troubling you with long letters or commissions, when you are charged with so much business at home and

abroad; I shall only repeat the Turkish maxim, which I think includes all that is necessary in a *court* life: "Caress the favorites, avoid the unfortunate, and trust nobody." You may think the second rule ill-natured; melancholy experience has convinced me of the ill consequence of mistaking distress for merit; there is no mistake more productive of evil. I could add many arguments to enforce this truth, but will not tire your patience.

I am exceedingly obliged to General Graham for his civilities; he tells me he has wrote to you the account of poor Mr. Cunningham's sad story;[1] I wish it do not come too late; the newspaper says the mean capitulator is rewarded; I fear the generous defender will be neglected.

[1] Mr. Cunningham was Captain Cunningham of the Second Regiment. Lord Stanhope thus alludes to Cunningham's conduct: "Captain Cunningham had been engineer in Second in Minorca, but being promoted to a majority in England, was on his way homewards, and was only delayed at Nice by the delivery of his wife and the sickness of his children. It was at Nice that he heard of the French designs against his former comrades at St. Philip's. He immediately exclaimed, 'They will want engineers!' and determined at all risks to rejoin them, first expending what money he had in purchasing timber for the platforms and other things needful for defence, and in hiring a ship for the voyage; nor did he hesitate, when his country's service was at stake, to leave his wife and children sick in a land of strangers." (*History of England*, third edition, iv. 65.) In repelling the assault, Cunningham was maimed in the right arm by the thrust of a bayonet. — T.

Admiral Byng was tried by court-martial and hung. The garrison finally surrendered, June, 1756. General Blakeney is he whom Lady Mary calls "the mean capitulator." He was created an Irish baron.

I intend to correspond with Lady Jane. I confess I was much pleased with her little letter; and, supposing Lady Mary is commenced fine lady, she may have no leisure to read or answer an old grandmother's letters. I presume Lady Jane is to play least in sight till her sister is disposed of; if she loves writing, it may be an employment not disagreeable to herself, and will be extremely grateful to me, who am ever, my dear child,

Your affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

CVI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

PADUA, *July* 7 [1757].

MY DEAR CHILD, — I received yours last night, which gave me a pleasure beyond what I am able to express (this is not according to the common expression, but a simple truth). I had not heard from you for some months, and was in my heart very uneasy, from the apprehension of some misfortune in your family; though as I always endeavor to avoid the anticipation of evil, which is a source of pain and can never be productive of any good, I stifled my fear as much as possible, yet it cost me many a midnight pang. You have been the passion of my life; you need thank me for nothing; I gratify myself whenever I can oblige you. I have already given into the hands of Mr. Anderson a

long letter for you, but it is now of so old a date, I accompany it with another. His journey has been delayed by a very extraordinary accident, which might have proved as fatal as that of Lord Drumlanrigh, or that, which I think worse, which happened to my convert Mr. Butler; fortunately it has only served to set the characters of both the governor and the pupil in a more amiable light. Mr. Archer was at breakfast with six other English gentlemen, and handling a blunderbuss, which he did not know to be charged, it burst and distributed among them six chained bullets, besides the splinters, which flew about in the manner you may imagine. His own hand was considerably wounded, yet the first word he spoke (without any regard to his own smart and danger) was, "I hope nobody is hurt." Nobody was hurt but himself, who has been ever since under cure, to preserve two of his fingers, which were very much torn. He had also a small rasure on his cheek, which is now quite healed. The paternal care and tenderness Mr. Anderson has shown on this occasion has recommended him to everybody. I wanted nothing to raise that esteem which is due to his sterling honesty and good heart, which I do not doubt you value as much as I do. If that wretch Hickman had been — but this is a melancholy thought, and as such ought to be suppressed.

. . . . . .

How important is the charge of youth! and how useless all the advantages of Nature and fortune without a well-turned mind! I have lately heard of

a very shining instance of this truth from two gentlemen (very deserving ones they seem to be) who have had the curiosity to travel into Moscovy, and now return to England with Mr. Archer. I inquired after my old acquaintance Sir Charles [Hanbury] Williams, who I hear is much broken, both in spirits and constitution. How happy that man might have been if there had been added to his natural and acquired endowments a dash of morality! If he had known how to distinguish between false and true felicity; and instead of seeking to increase an estate already too large, and hunting after pleasures that have made him rotten and ridiculous, he had bounded his desires of wealth and followed the dictates of his conscience! His servile ambition has gained him two yards of red ribbon and an exile into a miserable country, where there is no society and so little taste that I believe he suffers under a dearth of flatterers. This is said for the use of your growing sons, whom I hope no golden temptations will induce to marry women they cannot love or comply with measures they do not approve. All the happiness this world can afford is more within reach than is generally supposed. . . . A wise and honest man lives to his own heart, without that silly splendor that makes him a prey to knaves, and which commonly ends in his becoming one of the fraternity. I am very glad to hear Lord Bute's decent economy sets him above anything of that kind. I wish it may become national. A collective body of men differs very little from a single man; frugality is the foundation of generosity. I

have often been complimented on the English heroism, who have thrown away so many millions without any prospect of advantage to themselves, purely to succor a distressed princess. I never could hear these praises without some impatience; they sounded to me like panegyrics made by the dependents on the D. [Duke] of N. [Newcastle] and poor Lord Oxford, bubbled when they were commended and laughed at when undone. Some late events will, I hope, open our eyes; we shall see we are an island, and endeavor to extend our commerce rather than the Quixote reputation of redressing wrongs and placing diadems on heads that should be equally indifferent to us. When time has ripened mankind into common-sense, the name of conqueror will be an odious title. I could easily prove that, had the Spaniards established a trade with the Americans, they would have enriched their country more than by the addition of twenty-two kingdoms and all the mines they now work, — I do not say possess, since, though they are the proprietors, others enjoy the profit.

My letter is too long; I beg your pardon for it; 't is seldom I have an opportunity of speaking to you, and I would have you know all the thoughts of your most affectionate mother.

I desire you would thank your father for the jewels; you know I have nothing of my own.

CVII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Sept. 30, 1757.

My dear Child, — Lord Bute has been so obliging as to let me know your safe delivery, and the birth of another daughter;[1] may she be as meritorious in your eyes as you are in mine! I can wish nothing better to you both, though I have some reproaches to make you. Daughter! daughter! don't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuff, are the titles you give to my favorite amusement. If I called a white staff a stick of wood, a gold key gilded brass, and the ensigns of illustrious orders colored strings, this may be philosophically true, but would be very ill received. We have all our playthings; happy are they that can be contented with those they can obtain; those hours are spent in the wisest manner that can easiest shade the ills of life, and are least productive of ill consequences. I think my time better employed in reading the adventures of imaginary people than the Duchess of Marlborough's, who passed the latter years of her life in paddling with her will, and contriving schemes of plaguing some and extracting praise from others, to no purpose; eternally disappointed and eternally fretting. The active scenes

[1] Lady Louisa Stuart, whose "Recollections" have been already cited.

are over at my age. I indulge, with all the art I can, my taste for reading. If I would confine it to valuable books, they are almost as rare as valuable men. I must be content with what I can find. As I approach a second childhood, I endeavor to enter into the pleasures of it. Your youngest son is, perhaps, at this very moment riding on a poker with great delight, not at all regretting that it is not a gold one and much less wishing it an Arabian horse, which he would not know how to manage. I am reading an idle tale, not expecting wit or truth in it, and am very glad it is not metaphysics to puzzle my judgment or history to mislead my opinion. He fortifies his health by exercise ; I calm my cares by oblivion. The methods may appear low to busy people ; but if he improves his strength, and I forget my infirmities, we attain very desirable ends. I shall be much pleased if you would send your letters in Mr. Pitt's packet.

I have not heard from your father of a long time. I hope he is well, because you do not mention him.

I am ever, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours.

CVIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 13 [1758].

It was with great pleasure I received my dear child's letter of April 15 this day, May 13. Do not imagine that I have had hard thoughts of you when I lamented your silence, — I think I know your good heart too well to suspect you of any unkindness to me; in your circumstances many unavoidable accidents may hinder your writing; but having not heard from you for many months, my fears for your health made me very uneasy. I am surprised I am not oftener low-spirited, considering the vexations I am exposed to by the folly of Murray; I suppose he attributes to me some of the marks of contempt he is treated with, without remembering that he was in no higher esteem before I came. I confess I have received great civilities from some friends that I made here so long ago as the year 1740, but upon my honor have never named his name, or heard him mentioned by any noble Venetian whatever; nor have in any shape given him the least provocation to all the low malice he has shown me, which I have overlooked as below my notice, and would not trouble you with any part of it at present if he had not invented a new persecution, which may be productive of ill consequences. Here arrived, a few days ago, Sir James Steuart with his lady; that name was suffi-

cient to make me fly to wait on her. I was charmed to find a man of uncommon sense and learning, and a lady that without beauty is more amiable than the fairest of her sex. I offered them all the little good offices in my power, and invited them to supper; upon which our wise minister has discovered that I am in the interest of popery and slavery. As he has often said the same thing of Mr. Pitt, it would give me no mortification if I did not apprehend that his fertile imagination may support this wise idea by such circumstances as may influence those that do not know me. It is very remarkable that after having suffered all the rage of that party at Avignon for my attachment to the present reigning family, I should be accused here of favoring rebellion, when I hoped all our odious divisions were forgotten.

I return you many thanks, my dear child, for your kind intention of sending me another set of books. I am still in your debt nine shillings, and send you enclosed a note on Child to pay for whatever you buy; but no more duplicates (as well as I love nonsense I do not desire to have it twice over in the same words), no translations, no periodical papers; though I confess some of the "World" entertained me very much, particularly Lord Chesterfield and Horry Walpole, whom I knew at Florence; but whenever I met Dodsley I wished him out of the "World" with all my heart. The title was a very lucky one, being as you see productive of puns world without end, which is all the species of wit some people can either practise or understand. I beg you would direct the next

box to me, without passing through the hands of Smith; he makes so much merit of giving himself the trouble of asking for it that I am quite weary of him; beside that he imposes on me in everything. He has lately married Murray's sister, a beauteous virgin of forty, who after having refused all the peers in England, because the nicety of her conscience would not permit her to give her hand when her heart was untouched, she remained without a husband till the charms of that fine gentleman, Mr. Smith, who is only eighty-two, determined her to change her condition. In short, they are (as Lord Orrery says of Swift and company) an illustrious group, but with that I have nothing to do. I should be sorry to ruin anybody, or offend a man of such strict honor as Lord Holdernesse, who, like a great politician, has provided for a worthless relation without any expense. It has long been a maxim not to consider if a man is fit for a place, but if the place is fit for him, and we see the fruit of these Machiavellian proceedings. All I desire is that Mr. Pitt would require of this noble minister to behave civilly to me, the contrary conduct being very disagreeable. I will talk further on this subject in another letter, if this arrives safely. Let me have an answer as soon as possible, and think of me as

Your most affectionate mother.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours, who are very near my heart.

CIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

PADUA, *Sept.* 5 [1758].

I WROTE to you very lately, my dear child, in answer to that letter Mr. Hamilton brought me; he was so obliging to come on purpose from Venice to deliver it, as I believe I told you; but I am so highly delighted with this, dated August 4, giving an account of your little colony, I cannot help setting pen to paper, to tell you the melancholy joy I had in reading it. You would have laughed to see the old fool weep over it. I now find that age, when it does not harden the heart and sour the temper, naturally returns to the milky disposition of infancy. Time has the same effect on the mind as on the face. The predominant passion, the strongest feature, become more conspicuous from the others retiring; the various views of life are abandoned, from want of ability to pursue them, as the fine complexion is lost in wrinkles; but as surely as a large nose grows larger, and a wide mouth wider, the tender child in your nursery will be a tender old woman, though perhaps reason may have restrained the appearance of it till the mind, relaxed, is no longer capable of concealing its weakness; for weakness it is to indulge any attachment at a period of life when we are sure to part with life itself at a very short warning. According to the good English proverb, young people may die, but

old must. You see I am very industrious in finding comfort to myself in my exile, and to guard as long as I can against the peevishness which makes age miserable in itself and contemptible to others. 'T is surprising to me that with the most inoffensive conduct I should meet enemies, when I cannot be envied for anything, and have pretensions to nothing.

. . . . . .

My dear child, do not think of reversing nature by making me presents. I would send you all my jewels and my toilet if I knew how to convey them, though they are in some measure necessary in this country, where it would be, perhaps, reported I had pawned them, if they did not sometimes make their appearance. I know not how to send commissions for things I never saw; nothing of price I would have, as I would not new furnish an inn I was on the point of leaving; such is this world to me. Though china is in such estimation here, I have sometimes an inclination to desire your father to send me the two large jars that stood in the windows in Cavendish Square. I am sure he don't value them, and believe they would be of no use to you. I bought them at an auction for two guineas, before the D. of Argyll's example had made all china more or less fashionable.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessings to our dear children.

CX.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[*Indorsed,* "*Sept.* 5, 1758; *the second to Tubingen from Padua.*"]

Sir, — On the information of Mr. Duff that you had certainly wrote, though I had not been so happy to receive your letter, I thought (God forgive the vanity) that perhaps I was important enough to have my letters stopped, and immediately sent you a long scrawl without head or tail, which I am afraid is scarce intelligible, if ever it arrives.

This day, September 5, I have had the pleasure of a most agreeable and obliging mark of your remembrance; but as it has no date, I neither know when nor from whence it was written.

I am extremely sorry for dear Lady Fanny's disorder. I could repeat to her many wise sayings of ancients and moderns, which would be of as much service to her as a present of embroidered slippers to you when you have a fit of the gout. I have seen so much of hysterical complaints, — though Heaven be praised I never felt them, — I know it is an obstinate and very uneasy distemper, though never fatal, unless when quacks undertake to cure it. I have even observed that those who are troubled with it commonly live to old age. Lady Stair is one instance; I remember her screaming and crying when Miss Primrose, myself, and other girls were dancing two rooms distant. Lady Fanny has but

a slight touch of this distemper; read Dr. Sydenham, you will find the analysis of that and many other diseases, with a candor I never found in any other author. I confess I never had faith in any other physician, living or dead. Mr. Locke places him in the same rank with Sir Isaac Newton, and the Italians call him the English Hippocrates. I own I am charmed with his taking off the reproach which you men so saucily throw on our sex, as if we alone were subject to vapors; he clearly proves that your wise, honorable spleen is the same disorder and arises from the same cause; but you vile usurpers do not only engross learning, power, and authority to yourselves, but will be our superiors even in constitution of mind, and fancy you are incapable of the woman's weakness of fear and tenderness. Ignorance! I could produce such examples, —

> Show me that man of wit in all your roll,
> Whom some one woman has not made a fool.

I beg your pardon for these verses, but I have a right to scribble all that comes at my pen's end, being in high spirits on an occasion more interesting to me than the election of popes or emperors. His present Holiness is not much my acquaintance, but his family have been so since my first arrival at Venice, 1740. His father died only last winter, and was a very agreeable, worthy man, killed by a doctor; his mother rather suffered life than enjoyed it after the death of her husband, and was little

sensible of the advancement of her son, though I believe it made a greater impression on her than appeared, and it may be, hastened her death, which happened a fortnight after his elevation, in the midst of the extraordinary rejoicings at Venice on that occasion. The honors bestowed on his brother, the balls, festivals, etc., — are they not written in the daily books called newspapers?

I resisted all invitations, and am still at Padua, where reading, writing, riding, and walking find me full employment.

I accept the compliments of the fine young gentleman with the joy of an old woman who does not expect to be taken notice of; pray don't tell him I am an old woman. He shall be my toast from this forward; and provided he never sees me as long as he lives, I may be his. *A propos* of toasting, upon my honor I have not tasted a drop of punch since we parted; I cannot bear the sight of it, — it would recall too tender ideas, and I should be quarrelling with Fortune for our separation, when I ought to thank her Divinity for having brought us together. I could tell a long story of princes and potentates, but I am so little versed in State affairs I will not so much as answer your ensnaring question concerning the Jesuits, which is meddling at once with church and State.

This letter is of a horrible length, and what is worse (if any worse can be), such a rhapsody of nonsense as may kill poor Lady Fanny now she is low-spirited, though I am persuaded she has good-nature enough to be glad to hear I am happy, which

I could not be if I had not a view of seeing my friends so. As to you, sir, I make no excuses; you are bound to have indulgence for me as for a sister of the quill. I have heard Mr. Addison say he always listened to poets with patience, to keep up the dignity of the fraternity. Let me have an answer as soon as possible. Si vales, bene est; valeo.

. . . . . .

CXI.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

VENICE, *Nov.* 8 [1758].

MY DEAR CHILD, — You are extremely good to take so much care of my trifling commissions in the midst of so many important occupations. You judged very rightly on the subject of Mr. W. [Horace Walpole]. I saw him often both at Florence and Genoa, and you may believe I know him. I am not surprised at the character of poor Ch. Fielding's son. The epithet of "fair and foolish" belonged to the whole family; and as he was overpersuaded to marry an ugly woman, I suppose his offspring may have lost the beauty and retained the folly in full bloom. Colonel Otway, younger brother to Lady Bridget's spouse, came hither with Lord Mandeville; he told me that she has a daughter with the perfect figure of Lady Winchilsea. I wish she may meet with as good friends as I was to her aunt; but I won't trouble you with old stories. I have, indeed, my head so full of one new one that

I hardly know what I say; I am advised to tell it you, though I had resolved not to do it. I leave it to your prudence to act as you think proper; commonly speaking, silence and neglect is the best answer to defamation, but this is a case so peculiar that I am persuaded it never happened to any one but myself.

Some few months before Lord W. Hamilton married, there appeared a foolish song [1] said to be

[1] The song and answer are as follows: —

TO LORD WILLIAM HAMILTON.

Dear Colin, prevent my warm blushes,
Since how can I speak without pain?
My eyes oft have told you my wishes,
Why don't you their meaning explain?

My passion will lose by expression,
And you may too cruelly blame;
Then do not expect a confession
Of what is too tender to name.

Since yours is the province of speaking,
How can you then hope it from me?
Our wishes should be in our keeping,
Till yours tell us what they should be.

Alas! then, why don't you discover?
Did your heart feel such torments as mine
Eyes need not tell over and over
What I in my breast would confine.

Answered for Lord William Hamilton —

BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

Good Madam, when ladies are willing,
A man must needs look like a fool;
For me, I would not give a shilling
For one who would love out of rule.

wrote by a poetical great lady, who I really think was the character of Lady Arabella, in the "Female Quixote" (without the beauty); you may imagine such a conduct at court made her superlatively ridiculous. Lady Delawarr, a woman of great merit, with whom I lived in much intimacy, showed this fine performance to me. We were very merry in supposing what answer Lord William would make to these passionate addresses; she begged me to say something for a poor man who had nothing to say for himself. I wrote *extempore*, on the back of the song, some stanzas that went perfectly well to the tune. She promised they should never appear as mine, and faithfully kept her word. By what accident they have fallen into the hands of that thing Dodsley, I know not; but he has printed them as addressed by me to a very contemptible puppy, and my own words as his answer. I do not believe either Job or Socrates ever had such a provocation. You will tell me it cannot hurt me with any acquaintance I ever had; it is true, but it is an excellent piece of scandal for the same sort of people that propagate, with success, that your nurse

---

You should leave us to guess by your blushing,
And not speak the matter so plain;
'T is ours to write and be pushing,
'T is yours to affect a disdain.

That you 're in a terrible taking,
By all these sweet oglings I see;
But the fruit that can fall without shaking,
Indeed is too mellow for me.

Lord William married the notorious Lady Vane, whose memoirs appear in "Peregrine Pickle."

left her estate, husband, and family to go with me to England, and then I turned her to starve, after defrauding her of God knows what. I thank God witches are out of fashion, or I should expect to have it deposed, by several credible witnesses, that I had been seen flying through the air on a broom-stick, etc.

I am really sick with vexation, but ever your most affectionate mother.

CXII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

PADUA, *Aug.* 10 [1759].

MY DEAR CHILD, — I received yours by Mr. Hamilton with exceeding pleasure. It brought me all the news I desire to hear, your father's health and your prosperity being all the wishes I have on earth. I think few people have so much reason to bless God as yourself, — happy in the affection of the man you love, happy in seeing him high in the general esteem, —

"Lov'd by the good, by the oppressor feared,"

happy in a numerous, beautiful posterity. Mr. Hamilton gave me such an account of them as made me shed tears of joy, mixed with sorrow that I cannot partake the blessing of seeing them round you. He says Lady Anne is the beauty of the family, though they are all agreeable. May they

ever continue an honor to you, and a pleasure to all that see them.

There are preparations at Venice for a regatta; it can hardly be performed till the middle of next month. I shall remove thither to see it, though I have already seen that which was exhibited in compliment to the Prince of Saxony. It is by far the finest sight in Europe (not excepting our own coronations); it is hardly possible to give you any notion of it by description. The general [Graham] has shown me a letter from Lord Bute, very obliging to me, and which gives a very good impression both of his heart and understanding, from the honest resolutions and just reflections that are in it. My time here is entirely employed in riding, walking, and reading. I see little company, not being of a humor to join in their diversions. I feel greatly the loss of Sir James Steuart and Lady Fanny, whose conversation was equally pleasing and instructive. I do not expect to have it ever replaced. There are not many such couples. One of my best friends at Venice I believe your father remembers. He is Signor Antonio Mocenigo, widower of that celebrated beauty the Procuratessa Mocenigo. He is eighty-two, in perfect health and spirits, his eloquence much admired in the senate, where he has great weight. He still retains a degree of that figure which once made him esteemed one of the handsomest men in the republic. I am particularly obliged to him, and proud of being admitted into the number of seven or eight select friends, near his own age, who pass the evenings with him.

God bless you, my dear child, and all yours. Pray make my compliments to Lord Bute, and return him thanks for the kind manner in which he has mentioned me to the general. I am ever

Your most affectionate mother.

CXIII.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

[*Nov.* 9, 1759.]

My dear Child, — I received yours of October 18 this day, November 9. I am afraid some letters both of yours and mine are lost, nor am I much surprised at it, seeing the managements here. In this world much must be suffered, and we ought all to follow the rule of Epictetus, "Bear and forbear." General Wolfe is to be lamented, but not pitied. I am of your opinion, — compassion is only owing to his mother and intended bride, who I think the greatest sufferer, however sensible I am of a parent's tenderness. Disappointments in youth are those that are felt with the greatest anguish, when we are all in expectation of happiness, perhaps not to be found in this life.

I am very sorry L. [Lady] F. [Frances] Erskine has removed my poor sister to London, where she will only be more exposed. I would write again to her if I thought it could be any comfort in her deplorable condition. I say nothing to her daughter, who [is] too like her father for me to correspond with.

I am very much diverted with the adventures of the three Graces lately arrived in London, and am heartily sorry their mother has not learning enough to write memoirs. She might make the fortune of half a dozen Dodsleys. The youngest girl, called here *Bettina*, is taller than the Duchess of Montagu, and as red and white as any German alive. If she has sense enough to follow good instructions, she will be irresistible, and may produce very glorious novelties. (I know nothing of her, except her figure.) Our great minister has her picture amongst his collection of ladies—*basta!*

My health is better than I can reasonably expect at my age, though I have at present a great cold in my head, which makes writing uneasy to me, and forces me to shorten my letter to my dear child. I have received the books from Mr. Mackenzie. Mr. Walpole's is not amongst them. Make my best compliments to Lord Bute, and give my blessing to all my grandchildren. Your happiness in every circumstance is zealously wished by, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother.

CXIV.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Nov. 18, 1760.

I GIVE you thanks, my dear child, for your information of the death of the King. You may imagine how I am affected by it. I will not trouble you in

this busy time with a long letter. I do not doubt you are sufficiently tormented by pretensions and petitions. I hope you will not forget poor Mr. Anderson, and I desire Lord Bute to take care that Sir James Steuart's name is not excluded in the act of indemnity. This is a very small favor, yet it will make the happiness of a man of great merit.

My health is very precarious; may yours long continue, and the prosperity of your family. I bless God I have lived to see you so well established, and am ready to sing my *Nunc dimittis* with pleasure.

I own I could wish that we had a minister here who I had not reason to suspect would plunder my house if I die while he is in authority. General Graham is exceedingly infirm, and also so easily imposed on that whatever his intentions may be, he is incapable of protecting anybody. You will perhaps laugh at these apprehensions, since whatever happens in this world after our death is certainly nothing to us. It may be thought a fantastic satisfaction, but I confess I cannot help being earnestly desirous that what I leave may fall into your hands. Do not so far mistake me as to imagine I would have the present M. [minister] removed by advancement, which would have the sure consequence of my suffering, if possible, more impertinence from his successor.

My dear child, I am ever your most affectionate mother.

CXV.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

ROTTERDAM, *Dec.* 12, 1761.

I RECEIVED last post your agreeable and obliging letter. I am now on the point of setting out for London; very dubious (with my precarious state of health) whether I shall arrive there. If I do, you will certainly hear from me again; if not, accept ('t is all I can offer) my sincerest wishes for the prosperity of yourself and family. I do not at all despair of your affairs going according to your desire, though I am not ordained the happiness to see it. My warmest compliments to Lady F., and believe me ever, sir,

Your faithful friend and humble servant.

Behold! a hard, impenetrable frost has stopped my voyage, and I remain in the disagreeable state of uncertainty. I will not trouble you with my fruitless complaints; I am sure you have compassion for my present situation.

CXVI.

TO LADY FRANCIS STEUART.

GEORGE STREET, HANOVER SQUARE, *April* 23, 1762.

BELIEVE me, dear madam, I see my daughter often, and never see her without mentioning in the warmest manner your affairs. I hope that when

the proper season arrives (it cannot now be far off), all things will be adjusted to your satisfaction. It is the greatest pleasure I expect in the wretched remnant of life remaining to, dear madam,

Your faithful humble servant.

My sincere best wishes to all your ladyship's family.

CXVII.

TO LADY FRANCIS STEUART.[1]

[*Indorsed Lady Mary's last letter from London.*]

July 2, 1762.

DEAR MADAM, — I have been ill a long time, and am now so bad I am little capable of writing, but I would not pass in your opinion as either stupid or ungrateful. My heart is always warm in your service, and I am always told your affairs shall be taken care of.[1] You may depend, dear madam, nothing shall be wanting on the part of

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant.

[1] The Steuarts were permitted to return, through Lady Bute's influence probably. Sir James Steuart has a monument to him in Westminster Abbey.

THE END.

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